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LITERARY REMINISCENCES;

FROM

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER.

BY

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

BOSTON:
TICKNOR, REED, AND FIELDS.
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LITERARY REMINISCENCES.

CHAPTER XIII.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH AND ROBERT SOUTHEY.

THAT night — the first of my personal intercourse with Wordsworth — the first in which I saw him face to face — was (it is little, indeed, to say) memorable: it was marked by a change even in the physical condition of my nervous system. Long disappointment — hope for ever baffled, (and why should it be less painful because *self*-baffled?) — vexation and self-blame, almost self-contempt, at my own want of courage to face the man whom of all since the Flood I most yearned to behold: — these feelings had impressed upon my nervous sensibilities a character of irritation — agitation — restlessness — eternal self-dissatisfaction — which were gradually gathering into a distinct, well-defined type, that would, but for youth — almighty youth, and the spirit of youth — have shaped itself into some nervous complaint, wearing symptoms *sui generis*, (for most nervous complaints, in minds that are at all eccentric, will be *sui generis;*) and, perhaps, finally, have been immortalized in some medical journal as the anomalous malady of an interesting young gentleman, aged

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twenty-two, who was supposed to have studied too severely, and to have perplexed his brain with German metaphysics. To this result things tended; but, in one hour, all passed away. It was gone, never to return. The spiritual being whom I had anticipated — for, like Eloise,

> 'My fancy fram'd him of th' angelic kind —
> Some emanation of th' all beauteous mind' —

this ideal creature had, at length, been seen — seen 'in the flesh' — seen with fleshly eyes; and now, though he did not cease for years to wear something of the glory and the *aureola* which, in Popish legends, invests the head of superhuman beings, yet it was no longer as a being to be feared — it was as Raphael, the 'affable' angel, who conversed on the terms of man with man, that I now regarded him.

It was four o'clock, perhaps, when we arrived. At that hour the daylight soon declined; and, in an hour and a half, we were all collected about the tea-table. This, with the Wordsworths, under the simple rustic system of habits which they cherished then, and for twenty years after, was the most delightful meal in the day; just as dinner is in great cities, and for the same reason — because it was prolonged into a meal of leisure and conversation. And the reason why any meal favors and encourages conversation is pretty much the same as that which accounts for the breaking down of so many lawyers, and generally their ill-success, in the House of Commons. In the courts of law, when a man is haranguing upon general and abstract topics, if at any moment he feels getting beyond his depth, if he finds his anchor driving, he can always bring up, and drop his anchor anew upon the *terra firma* of his case: the facts of this, as furnished by his brief, always assure him of a retreat as soon as he finds his more

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general thoughts failing him; and the consciousness of this retreat, by inspiring confidence, makes it much less probable that they *should* fail. But, in Parliament, where the advantage of a case with given facts and circumstances, or the details of a statistical report, does not offer itself once in a dozen times that a member has occasion to speak — where he has to seek unpremeditated arguments and reasonings of a general nature, from the impossibility of wholly evading the previous speeches that may have made an impression upon the House; — this necessity, at any rate a trying one to most people, is doubly so to one who has always walked in the leading-strings of a *case* — always swam with the help of bladders, in the conscious resource of his *facts*. The reason, therefore, why a lawyer succeeds ill as a senator, is to be found in the sudden removal of an artificial aid. Now, just such an artificial aid is furnished to timid or to unready men by a dinner-table, and the miscellaneous attentions, courtesies, or occupations which it enjoins or permits, as by the fixed memoranda of a brief. If a man finds the ground slipping from beneath him in a discussion — if, in a tide of illustration, he suddenly comes to a pause for want of matter — he can make a graceful close, a self-interruption, that shall wear the interpretation of forbearance, or even win the rhetorical credit of an *aposiopesis*, (according to circumstances,) by stopping to perform a duty of the occasion: pressed into a dilemma by some political partisan, one may evade it by pressing him to take a little of the dish before one; or, plagued for a reason which is not forthcoming, one may deprecate this logical rigor by inviting one's tormentor to wine. In short, what I mean to say is, that a dinner party, or any meal which is made the meal for intellectual relaxation, must for ever offer the advantages of a *palæstra*, in which the weapons are foils and

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the wounds not mortal: in which, whilst the interest is that of a real, the danger is that of a sham fight: in which, whilst there is always an opportunity for swimming into deep waters, there is always a retreat into shallow ones. And it may be laid down as a maxim, that no nation is civilized to the height of its capacity until it *has* one such meal. With our ancestors of sixty years back, this meal was supper: with the Athenians and Greeks it was dinner,* (cœna and δεῖπνον,) as with ourselves; only that the hour was a very early one, in consequence, partly, of the early bedtime of these nations, (which again was occasioned by the dearness of candle-light to the mass of those who had political rights, on whose account the forensic meetings, the visits of clients to their patrons, &c., opened the political day by four hours earlier than with us,) and partly in consequence of the uncommercial habits of the ancients — commerce having at no time created an aristocracy of its own, and, therefore, having at no time and in no city (no, not Alexandria nor Carthage) dictated the household and social arrangements, or the distribution of its hours.

I have been led insensibly into this digression. I now resume the thread of my narrative. That night, after hearing conversation superior by much, in its tone and subject, to any which I had ever heard before — one exception only being made, in favor of Coleridge, whose

* A curious dissertation might be written on this subject. Meantime, it is remarkable that almost all modern nations have committed the blunder of supposing the Latin word for supper to be *cœna*, and of dinner, *prandium*. Now, the essential definition of dinner is, that which is the main meal — (what the French call the great meal.) By that or any test, (for example, the *time*, three, P. M.,) the Roman cœna was dinner. Even Louis XII., whose death is partly ascribed to his having altered his dinner hour from nine to eleven, A. M. in compliment to his young English bride, did not *sup* at three, P. M.

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style differed from Wordsworth's in this, that being far more agile and more comprehensive, consequently more showy and surprising, it was less impressive and weighty; for Wordsworth's was slow in its movement, solemn, majestic. After a luxury so rare as this, I found myself, about eleven at night, in a pretty bedroom, about fourteen feet by twelve. Much I feared that this might turn out the best room in the house; and it illustrates the hospitality of my new friends, to mention that it was. Early in the morning, I was awoke by a little voice, issuing from a little cottage bed in an opposite corner, soliloquizing in a low tone. I soon recognised the words — 'Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried;' and the voice I easily conjectured to be that of the eldest amongst Wordsworth's children, a son, and at that time about three years old. He was a remarkably fine boy in strength and size, promising (which has in fact been realized) a much more powerful person, physically, than that of his father. Miss Wordsworth I found making breakfast in the little sitting-room. No urn was there; no glittering breakfast service; a kettle boiled upon the fire, and everything was in harmony with these unpretending arrangements. I, the son of a merchant, and naturally, therefore, in the midst of luxurious (though not ostentatious) display from my childhood, had never seen so humble a *ménage:* and contrasting the dignity of the man with this honorable poverty, and this courageous avowal of it, his utter absence of all effort to disguise the simple truth of the case, I felt my admiration increase to the uttermost by all I saw. This, thought I to myself, is, indeed, in his own words —

'Plain living, and high thinking.'

This is indeed to reserve the humility and the parsimonies of life for its bodily enjoyments, and to apply its lavishness

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and its luxury to its enjoyments of the intellect. So might Milton have lived; so Marvel. Throughout the day — which was rainy — the same style of modest hospitality prevailed. Wordsworth and his sister — myself being of the party — walked out in spite of the rain, and made the circuit of the two lakes, Grasmere and its dependency Rydal — a walk of about six miles. On the third day, Mrs. Coleridge having now pursued her journey northward to Keswick, and having, at her departure, invited me, in her own name as well as Southey's, to come and see them, Wordsworth proposed that we should go thither in company, but not by the direct route — a distance of only thirteen miles: this we were to take in our road homeward; our outward-bound journey was to be by way of Ulleswater — a circuit of forty-three miles.

On the third morning after my arrival in Grasmere, I found the whole family, except the two children, prepared for the expedition across the mountains. I had heard of no horses, and took it for granted that we were to walk; however, at the moment of starting, a cart — the common farmers' cart of the country — made its appearance; and the driver was a bonny young woman of the vale. Such a vehicle I had never in my life seen used for such a purpose; but what was good enough for the Wordsworths was good enough for me; and, accordingly, we were all carted along to the little town, or large village, of Ambleside — three and a half miles distant. Our style of travelling occasioned no astonishment; on the contrary, we met a smiling salutation wherever we appeared — Miss Wordsworth being, as I observed, the person most familiarly known of our party, and the one who took upon herself the whole expenses of the flying colloquies exchanged with stragglers on the road. What struck me with most astonishment, however, was the liberal manner

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of our fair driver, who made no scruple of taking a leap, with the reins in her hand, and seating herself dexterously upon the shafts (or, in Westmoreland phrase, the *trams*) of the cart. From Ambleside — and without one foot of intervening flat ground — begins to rise the famous ascent of Kirkstone; after which, for three long miles, all riding in a cart drawn by one horse becomes impossible. The ascent is computed at three miles, but is, probably, a little more. In some parts it is almost frightfully steep; for the road being only the original mountain track of shepherds, gradually widened and improved from age to age, (especially since the era of tourists began,) is carried over ground which no engineer, even in alpine countries, would have viewed as practicable. In ascending, this is felt chiefly as an obstruction and not as a peril, unless where there is a risk of the horses backing; but in the reverse order, some of these precipitous descents are terrific: and yet, once in utter darkness, after midnight, and the darkness irradiated only by continual streams of lightning, I was driven down this whole descent, at a full gallop, by a young woman — the carriage being a light one, the horses frightened, and the descents, at some critical parts of the road, so literally like the sides of a house, that it was difficult to keep the fore wheels from pressing upon the hind legs of the horses. Indeed, this is only according to the custom of the country, as I have before mentioned. The innkeeper of Ambleside, or Lowwood, will not mount this formidable hill without four horses. The leaders you are not required to take beyond the first three miles; but, of course, they are glad if you will take them on the whole stage of nine miles, to Patterdale; and, in that case, there is a real luxury at hand for those who enjoy velocity of motion. The descent into Patterdale is much above two miles; but

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such is the propensity for flying down hills in Westmoreland, that I have found the descent accomplished in about six minutes, which is at the rate of eighteen miles an hour; the various turnings of the road making the speed much more sensible to the traveller. The pass, at the summit of this ascent, is nothing to be compared in sublimity with the pass under Great Gavil from Wastdale-head; but it is solemn, and profoundly impressive. At a height so awful as this, it may be easily supposed that all human dwellings have been long left behind: no sound of human life, no bells of churches or chapels ever ascend so far. And, as is noticed in Wordsworth's fine stanzas upon this memorable pass, the only sound that, even in noonday, disturbs the sleep of the weary pedestrian, is that of the bee murmuring amongst the mountain flowers — a sound as ancient

'As man's imperial front, and woman's roseate bloom.'

This way, and (which, to the sentiment of the case, is an important point) this way, of *necessity* and *inevitably*, passed the Roman legions; for it is a mathematic impossibility that any other route could be found for an army nearer to the eastward of this pass than by way of Kendal and Shap; nearer to the westward, than by way of Legbesthwaite and St. John's Vale, (and so by Threlkeld to Penrith.) Now, these two roads are exactly twenty-five miles apart; and, since a Roman cohort was stationed at Ambleside, (*Amboglane*,) it is pretty evident that this cohort would not correspond with the more northerly stations by either of these remote routes — having immediately before it this direct though difficult pass of Kirkstone. On the solitary area of table-land which you find at the summit — though, Heaven knows, you might almost cover it with a drawing-room carpet,

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so suddenly does the mountain take to its old trick of precipitous descent, on both sides alike — there are only two objects to remind you of man and his workmanship. One is a guide-post — always a picturesque and interesting object, because it expresses a wild country and a labyrinth of roads, and often made much more interesting (as in this case) by the lichens which cover it, and which record the generations of men to whom it has done its office; as also by the crucifix form which inevitably recall, in all mountainous regions, the crosses of Catholic lands, raised to the memory of wayfaring men who have perished by the hand of the assassin.

The other memorial of man is even more interesting: — Amongst the fragments of rock which lie in the confusion of a ruin on each side of the road, one there is which exceeds the rest in height, and which, in shape, presents a very close resemblance to a church. This lies to the left of the road as you are going from Ambleside; and, from its name, Churchstone, (Kirkstone,) is derived the name of the pass, and from the pass the name of the mountain. The guide-post — which was really the work of man — tells those going southwards (for to those who go northwards it is useless, since, in that direction, there is no choice of roads) that the left hand track conducts you to Troutbeck, and Bowness, and Kendal; the right hand to Ambleside, and Hawkshead, and Ulverstone. The church — which is but a phantom of man's handiwork — might, however, really be mistaken for such, were it not that the rude and almost inaccessible state of the adjacent ground proclaims the truth. As to size, *that* is remarkably difficult to estimate upon wild heaths or mountain solitudes, where there are no leadings through gradations of distance, nor any artificial standards, from which height or breadth can be properly deduced. This

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mimic church, however, has a peculiarly fine effect in this wild situation, which leaves so far below the tumults of this world: the phantom church, by suggesting the phantom and evanescent image of a congregation, where never congregation met; of the pealing organ, where never sound was heard except of wild natural notes, or else of the wind rushing through these mighty gates of everlasting rock — in this way, the fanciful image that accompanies the traveller on his road, for half a mile or more, serves to bring out the antagonist feeling of intense and awful solitude, which is the natural and presiding sentiment — the *religio loci* — that broods for ever over the romantic pass.

Having walked up Kirkstone, we ascended our cart again; then rapidly descended to Brothers' Water — a lake which lies immediately below; and, about three miles further, through endless woods and under the shade of mighty fells, immediate dependencies and processes of the still more mighty Helvellyn, we approached the vale of Patterdale, when, by moonlight, we reached the inn. Here we found horses — by whom furnished I never asked nor heard; perhaps I owe somebody for a horse to this day. All I remember is — that through those most romantic woods and rocks of Stybarren — through those silent glens of Glencoin and Glenridding — through that most romantic of parks then belonging to the Duke of Norfolk, viz., Gobarrow Park — we saw alternately, for four miles, the most grotesque and the most awful spectacles —

> 'Abbey windows
> And Moorish temples of the Hindoos,'

all fantastic, all as unreal and shadowy as the moonlight which created them; whilst, at every angle of the road,

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broad gleams came upwards of Ulleswater, stretching for nine miles northward, but, fortunately for its effect, broken into three watery chambers of almost equal length, and rarely visible at once. At the foot of the lake, in a house called Ewsmere, we passed the night, having accomplished about twenty-two miles only in our day's walking and riding. The next day Wordsworth and I, leaving at Ewsmere the rest of our party, spent the morning in roaming through the woods of Lowther; and, towards evening, we dined together at Emont Bridge, one mile short of Penrith. Afterwards, we walked into Penrith. There Wordsworth left me in excellent quarters — the house of Captain Wordsworth, from which the family happened to be absent. Whither he himself adjourned, I know not, nor on what business; however, it occupied him throughout the next day; and, therefore, I employed myself in sauntering along the road, about seventeen miles, to Keswick. There I had been directed to ask for Greta Hall, which, with some little difficulty, I found; for it stands out of the town a few hundred yards, upon a little eminence overhanging the river Greta. It was about seven o'clock when I reached Southey's door; for I had stopped to dine at a little public house in Threlkeld, and had walked slowly for the last two hours in the dark. The arrival of a stranger occasioned a little sensation in the house; and, by the time the front door could be opened, I saw Mrs. Coleridge, and a gentleman whom I could not doubt to be Southey, standing, very hospitably, to greet my entrance. Southey was, in person, somewhat taller than Wordsworth, being about five feet eleven in height, or a trifle more, whilst Wordsworth was about five feet ten; and, partly from having slenderer limbs, partly from being more symmetrically formed about the shoulders than

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Wordsworth, he struck one as a better and lighter figure, to the effect of which his dress contributed; for he wore pretty constantly a short jacket and pantaloons, and had much the air of a Tyrolese mountaineer.

On the next day arrived Wordsworth. I could read at once, in the manner of the two authors, that they were not on particularly friendly, or rather, I should say, confidential terms. It seemed to me as if both had silently said — we are too much men of sense to quarrel, because we do not happen particularly to like each other's writings: we are neighbors, or what passes for such in the country. Let us show each other the courtesies which are becoming to men of letters; and, for any closer connection, our distance of thirteen miles may be always sufficient to keep us from *that*. In after life, it is true — fifteen years, perhaps, from this time — many circumstances combined to bring Southey and Wordsworth into more intimate terms of friendship: agreement in politics, sorrows which had happened to both alike in their domestic relations, and the sort of tolerance for different opinions in literature, or, indeed, in anything else, which advancing years and experience are sure to bring with them. But, at this period, Southey and Wordsworth entertained a mutual esteem, but did not cordially like each other. Indeed, it would have been odd if they had. Wordsworth lived in the open air: Southey in his library, which Coleridge used to call his wife. Southey had particularly elegant habits (Wordsworth called them finical) in the use of books. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was so negligent, and so self-indulgent in the same case, that as Southey, laughing, expressed it to me some years afterwards, when I was staying at Greta Hall on a visit — 'To introduce Wordsworth into one's library, is like letting a bear into a tulip garden.' What I mean by self-indulgent is this:

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generally it happens that new books baffle and mock one's curiosity by their uncut leaves; and the trial is pretty much the same, as when, in some town, where you are utterly unknown, you meet the postman at a distance from your inn, with some letter for yourself from a dear, dear friend in foreign regions, without money to pay the postage. How is it with you, dear reader, in such a case? Are you not tempted (*I am* grievously) to snatch the letter from his tantalizing hand, spite of the roar which you anticipate of 'Stop thief!' and make off as fast as you can for some solitary street in the suburbs, where you may instantly effect an entrance upon your new estate before the purchase-money is paid down? Such were Wordsworth's feelings in regard to new books; of which the first exemplication I had was early in my acquaintance with him, and on occasion of a book which (if any could) justified the too summary style of his advances in rifling its charms. On a level with the eye, when sitting at the tea-table in my little cottage at Grasmere, stood the collective works of Edmund Burke. The book was to me an eye-sore and an ear-sore for many a year, in consequence of the cacophonous title lettered by the bookseller upon the back — 'Burke's Works.' I have heard it said, by the way, that Donne's intolerable defect of ear, grew out of his own baptismal name, when harnessed to his own surname — *John Donne.* No man, it was said, who had listened to this hideous jingle from childish years, could fail to have his genius for discord, and the abominable in sound, improved to the utmost. Not less dreadful than *John Donne* was 'Burke's Works;' which, however, on the old principle, that every day's work is no day's work, continued to annoy me for twenty-one years. Wordsworth took down the volume; unfortunately it was uncut: fortunately, and by a special

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Providence as to him, it seemed, tea was proceeding at the time. Dry toast required butter; butter required knives; and knives then lay on the table; but sad it was for the virgin purity of Mr. Burke's as yet unsunned pages, that every knife bore upon its blade testimonies of the service it had rendered. Did *that* stop Wordsworth? Did that cause him to call for another knife? Not at all; he

> 'Look'd at the knife that caus'd his pain:
> And look'd and sigh'd, and look'd and sigh'd again;'

and then, after this momentary tribute to regret, he tore his way into the heart of the volume with this knife, that left its greasy honors behind it upon every page: and are they not there to this day? This personal experience just brought me acquainted with Wordsworth's habits, and that particular, especially, with his intense impatience for one minute's delay, which would have brought a remedy; and yet the reader may believe that it is no affectation in me to say, that fifty such cases could have given me but little pain, when I explain, that whatever could be made good by money, at that time, I did not regard. Had the book been an old black-letter book, having a value from its rarity, I should have been disturbed in an indescribable degree; but simply with reference to the utter impossibility of reproducing that mode of value. As to the Burke, it was a common book; I had bought the book, with many others, at the sale of Sir Cecil Wray's library, for about two-thirds of the selling price: I could easily replace it; and I mention the case at all, only to illustrate the excess of Wordsworth's outrages on books, which made him, in Southey's eyes, a mere monster; for Southey's beautiful library was his estate; and this difference of habits would alone have sufficed to alienate him

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from Wordsworth. And so I argued in other cases of the same nature.

Meantime, had Wordsworth done as Coleridge did, how cheerfully should I have acquiesced in his destruction (such it was, in a pecuniary sense,) of books, as the very highest obligation he could confer. Coleridge often spoiled a book; but, in the course of doing this, he enriched that book with so many and so valuable notes, tossing about him, with such lavish profusion, from such a cornucopia of discursive reading, and such a fusing intellect, commentaries, so many-angled and so many-colored, that I have envied many a man whose luck has placed him in the way of such injuries; and that man must have been a churl (though, God knows! too often this churl *has* existed) who could have found in his heart to complain. But Wordsworth rarely, indeed, wrote on the margin of books; and, when he did, nothing could less illustrate his intellectual superiority. The comments were such as might have been made by anybody. Once, I remember, before I had ever seen Wordsworth — probably a year before — I met a person who had once enjoyed the signal honor of travelling with him to London. It was in a stage-coach. But the person in question well knew *who* it was that had been his *compagnon de voyage.* Immediately he was glorified in my eyes. 'And,' said I, to this glorified gentleman, (who, *par parenthése*, was also a donkey,) 'now, as you travelled nearly three hundred miles in the company of Mr. Wordsworth, consequently, (for this was in 1805,) during two nights and two days, doubtless you must have heard many profound remarks that would inevitably fall from his lips.' Nay, Coleridge had also been of the party; and, if Wordsworth *solus* could have been dull, was it within human possibilities that these *gemini* should have been so? 'Was it pos-

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sible?' I said; and, perhaps, my donkey, who looked like one that had been immoderately threatened, at last took courage; his eye brightened; and he intimated that he *did* remember something that Wordsworth had said — an 'observe,' as the Scotch call it.

'Ay, indeed; and what was it now? What did the great man say?'

'Why, sir, in fact, and to make a long story short, on coming near to London, we breakfasted at Baldock — you know Baldock? It's in Hertfordshire. Well, now, sir, would you believe it, though we were quite in regular time, the breakfast was precisely good for nothing?'

'And Wordsworth?'

'He observed'——

'What did he observe?'

'That the buttered toast looked, for all the world, as if it had been soaked in hot water.'

Ye heavens! '*buttered toast!*' And was it *this* I waited for? Now, thought I, had Henry Mackenzie been breakfasting with Wordsworth, at Baldock, (and, strange enough! in years to come I *did* breakfast with Henry Mackenzie, for the solitary time I ever met him, and at Wordsworth's house, in Rydal,) he would have carried off one sole reminiscence from the meeting — namely, a confirmation of his creed, that we English are all dedicated, from our very cradle, to the luxuries of the palate, and peculiarly to this.* *Proh pudor!* Yet, in sad sin-

* It is not known to the English, but it is a fact which I can vouch for, from my six or seven years' residence in Scotland, that the Scotch, one and all, believe it to be an inalienable characteristic of an Englishman to be fond of good eating. What indignation have I, and how many a time, had occasion to feel and utter on this subject! But of this at some other time. Meantime, the Man of Feeling had this creed in excess; and, in some paper, (of *The Mirror* or *The Lounger*,) he describes an English tourist in Scotland by saying — 'I would not wish

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cerity, Wordsworth's pencil-notices in books were quite as disappointing. In Roderick Random, for example, I found a note upon a certain luscious description, to the effect 'that such things should be left to the imagination of the reader — not expressed.' In another place, that it was 'improper;' and, in a third, 'that the principle laid down was doubtful;' or, as Sir Roger de Coverley observes, 'that much might be said on both sides.' All this, however, indicates nothing more than that different men require to be roused by different stimulants. Wordsworth, in his marginal notes, thought of nothing but delivering himself of a strong feeling, with which he wished to challenge the reader's sympathy. Coleridge imagined an audience before him; and, however doubtful that consummation might seem, I am satisfied that he never wrote a line for which he did not feel the momentary inspiration of sympathy and applause, under the confidence, that, sooner or later, all which he had committed to the chance margins of books would converge and assemble in some common reservoir of reception. Bread scattered upon the waters will be gathered after many days. This, perhaps, was the consolation that supported him; and the prospect that, for a time, his Arethusa of truth would flow under ground, did not, perhaps, disturb, but rather cheered and elevated the sublime old somnambulist.*

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to be thought national; yet, in mere reverence for truth, I am bound to say, and to declare to all the world, (let who will be offended,) that the first innkeeper in Scotland, under whose roof we met with genuine buttered toast, was an Englishman.

* Meantime, if it did not disturb *him*, it ought to disturb *us*, his immediate successors, who are at once the most likely to retrieve these *losses* by direct efforts, and the least likely to benefit by any casual or indirect retrievals, such as will be produced by time. Surely a subscription should be set on foot to recover all books enriched by his marginal notes. I would subscribe; and I know others who would largely.

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Meantime, Wordsworth's habits of using books — which, I am satisfied, would, in those days, alone have kept him at a distance from most men with fine libraries — were not vulgar; not the habits of those who turn over the page by means of a wet finger, (though even this abomination I have seen perpetrated by a Cambridge tutor and fellow of a college; but then he had been bred up as a ploughman, and the son of a ploughman;) no; but his habits were more properly barbarous and licentious, and in the spirit of audacity belonging *de jure* to no man but him who could plead an income of four or five hundred thousand per annum, and to whom the Bodleian or the Vatican would be a three years' purchase. Gross, meantime, was his delusion upon this subject. Himself he regarded as the golden mean between the too little and the too much of care for books; and, as it happened that every one of his friends far exceeded him in this point, curiously felicitous was the explanation which he gave of this superfluous case, so as to bring it within the natural operation of some known fact in the man's peculiar situation. Southey (he was by nature something of an old bachelor) had his house filled with pretty articles — *bijouterie*, and so forth; and, naturally, he wished his books to be kept up to the same level — burnished and bright for show. Sir George Beaumont — this peculiarly elegant and accomplished man — was an old and most affectionate friend of Wordsworth's. Sir George Beaumont never had any children: if he had been so blessed, they, by familiarizing him with the spectacle of books ill used — stained, torn, mutilated, &c. — would have lowered the standard of his requisitions. The short solution of the whole case was — and it illustrated the nature of his education — he had never lived in a regular family at

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a time when habits are moulded. From boyhood to manhood he had been *sui juris*.

Returning to Southey and Greta Hall, both the house and the master may deserve a few words more of description. For the master, I have already sketched his person; and his face I profess myself unable to describe accurately. His hair was black, and yet his complexion was fair: his eyes I believe to be hazel and large; but I will not vouch for that fact: his nose aquiline; and he has a remarkable habit of looking up into the air, as if looking at abstractions. The expression of his face was that of a very acute and an aspiring man. So far, it was even noble, as it conveyed a feeling of a serene and gentle pride, habitually familiar with elevating subjects of contemplation. And yet it was impossible that this pride could have been offensive to anybody, chastened as it was by the most unaffected modesty; and this modesty made evident and prominent by the constant expression of reverence for the great men of the age, (when he happened to esteem them such,) and for all the great patriarchs of our literature. The point in which Southey's manner failed the most in conciliating regard, was, in all which related to the external expressions of friendliness. No man could be more sincerely hospitable — no man more essentially disposed to give up even his time (the possession which he most valued) to the service of his friends. But there was an air of reserve and distance about him — the reserve of a lofty, self-respecting mind, but, perhaps, a little too freezing — in his treatment of all persons who were not amongst the *corps* of his ancient fireside friends. Still, even towards the veriest strangers, it is but justice to notice his extreme courtesy in sacrificing his literary employments for the day, whatever they might be, to the

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duty (for such he made it) of doing the honors of the lake, and the adjacent mountains.

Southey was at that time, (1807,) and has continued ever since, the most industrious of all literary men on record. A certain task he prescribed to himself every morning before breakfast. This could not be a very long one, for he breakfasted at nine, or soon after, and *never* rose before eight, though he went to bed duly at half-past ten; but, as I have many times heard him say, less than nine hours' sleep he found insufficient. From breakfast to a latish dinner (about half after five or six) was his main period of literary toil. After dinner, according to the accident of having or not having visiters in the house, he sat over his wine; or he retired to his library again, from which, about eight, he was summoned to tea. But, generally speaking, he closed his *literary* toils at dinner; the whole of the hours after that meal being dedicated to his correspondence. This, it may be supposed, was unusually large, to occupy so much of his time, for his letters rarely extended to any length. At that period, the post, by way of Penrith, reached Keswick about six or seven in the evening. And so pointedly regular was Southey in all his habits, that, short as the time was, all letters were answered on the same evening which brought them. At tea, he read the London papers. It was perfectly astonishing to men of less methodical habits, to find how much he got through of elaborate business by his unvarying system of arrangement in the distribution of his time. We often hear it said, in accounts of pattern ladies and gentlemen, (what Coleridge used contemptuously to style *goody* people,) that they found time for everything; that business never interrupted pleasure; that labors of love and charity never stood in the way of courtesy or personal enjoyment. This is easy to say —

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easy to put down as one feature of an imaginary portrait: but I must say, that, in actual life, I have seen few such cases. Southey, however, *did* find time for everything. It moved the sneers of some people, that even his poetry was composed according to a predetermined rule; that so many lines should be produced, by contract, as it were, before breakfast; so many at such another definite interval. And I acknowledge, that, so far, I went along with the sneerers, as to marvel exceedingly how that *could* be possible. But, if *à priori*, one laughed and expected to see verses corresponding to this mechanic rule of construction, *à posteriori* one was bound to judge of the verses as one found them. Supposing them good, they were entitled to honor, no matter for the previous reasons which made it possible that they would *not* be good. And generally, however undoubtedly they *ought* to have been bad, the world has pronounced them good. In fact, they *are* good; and the sole objection to them is, that they are too intensely *objective* — too much reflect the mind, as spreading itself out upon external things — too little exhibit the mind, as introverting itself upon its own thoughts and feelings. This, however, is an objection, which only seems to limit the range of the poetry — and all poetry *is* limited in its range: none comprehends more than a section of the human power. Meantime, the prose of Southey was that by which he lived. *The Quarterly Review*, it was by which, as he expressed it to myself in 1810, he '*made the pot boil.*'

About the same time, possibly as early as 1808, (for I think that I remember in that journal an account of the Battle of Vimiera,) Southey was engaged by an Edinburgh publisher, [Constable, was it not?] to write the entire historical part of *The Edinburgh Annual Register*, at a salary of £400 per annum. Afterwards, the pub-

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lisher, who was intensely national, and, doubtless, never from the first cordially relished the notion of importing English aid into a city teeming with briefless barristers and variety of talent, threw out a hint that perhaps he might reduce the salary to £300. Just about this time I happened to see Southey, who said laughingly — 'If the man of Edinburgh does this, I shall *strike* for an advance of wages.' I presume that he *did* strike, and, like many other 'operatives,' without effect. Those who work for lower wages during a strike are called *snobs*,* the men who stand out being *nobs*. Southey became a resolute nob; but some snob was found in Edinburgh, some youthful advocate, who accepted £300 per annum, and thenceforward Southey lost this part of his income. I once possessed the whole work; and in one part, viz. *The Domestic Chronicle*, I know that it is executed with a most culpable carelessness — the beginnings of cases being given without the ends, the ends without the beginnings — a defect but too common in public journals. The credit of the work, however, was staked upon its treatment of the current public history of Europe, and the tone of its politics in times so full of agitation, and teeming with new births in every year, some fated to prove abortive, but others bearing golden promises for the human race. Now, whatever might be the talent with which Southey's successor performed his duty, there was a loss in one point for which no talent of mere execution could make amends. The very prejudices of Southey tended to unity of feeling: they were in harmony with each other, and grew out of a strong moral feeling, which is the one sole secret for giving interest to an historical narration, fusing the incoherent details into one body, and carrying the reader

* See the Evidence before the House of Commons' Committee.

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fluently along the else monotonous recurrences and unmeaning details of military movements. Well or ill directed, a strong moral feeling, and a profound sympathy with elementary justice, is that which creates a soul under what else may well be denominated, Miltonically, 'the ribs of death.'

Now this, and a mind already made up even to obstinacy upon all public questions, were the peculiar qualifications which Southey brought to the task — qualifications not to be bought in any market, not to be compensated by any amount of mere intellectual talent, and almost impossible as the qualifications of a much younger man. As a pecuniary loss, though considerable, Southey was not unable to support it; for he had a pension from Government before this time, and under the following circumstances: — Charles Wynne, the brother of Sir Watkin, the great autocrat of North Wales — that C. W. who is almost equally well known for his knowledge of Parliamentary usage, which pointed him out to the notice of the House as an eligible person to fill the office of speaker, and for his unfortunately shrill voice, which chiefly it was that defeated his claim — (in fact, as is universally known, his brother and he, for different defects of voice and utterance, are called *Bubble and Squeak*) — this C. W. had believed himself to have been deeply indebted to Southey's high-toned moral example, and to his wise counsels, during the time when both were students at Oxford, for the fortunate direction given to his own wavering impulses. This sense of obligation he endeavored to express, by settling a pension upon Southey from his own funds. At length, upon the death of Mr. Pitt, early in 1806, an opening was made for the Fox and Grenville parties to come into office. Charles Wynne, as a person connected by marriage with the house of Grenville, and united with them in political

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opinions, shared in the golden shower; he also received a place; and, upon the strength of his improving prospects, he married: upon which it occurred to Southey, that it was no longer right to tax the funds of one who was now called upon to support an establishment becoming his rank. Under that impression, he threw up his pension; and upon *their* part, to express their sense of what they considered a delicate and honorable sacrifice, the Grenvilles placed Southey upon the national pension list.

What might be the exact color of Southey's political creed in this year, 1807, it is difficult to say. The great revolution, in his way of thinking upon such subjects, with which he has been so often upbraided as something equal in delinquency to a deliberate tergiversation or moral apostasy, could not have then taken place; and of this I am sure, from the following little anecdote connected with this visit: — On the day after my own arrival at Greta Hall, came Wordsworth following upon my steps from Penrith. We dined and passed that evening with Mr. Southey. The next morning, after breakfast, previously to leaving Keswick, we were sitting in Southey's library; and he was discussing with Wordsworth the aspect of public affairs: for my part, I was far too diffident to take any part in such a conversation, for I had no opinions at all upon politics, nor any interest in public affairs, further than that I had a keen sympathy with the national honor, gloried in the name of Englishman, and had been bred up in a frenzied horror of jacobinism. Not having been old enough, at the first outbreak of the French Revolution, to participate (as else, undoubtedly, I should have done) in the golden hopes of its early dawn, my first youthful introduction to foreign politics had been in seasons and circumstances that taught me to approve of all I heard in abhorrence of French excesses, and to wor-

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ship the name of Pitt; otherwise my whole heart had been so steadily fixed on a different world from the world of our daily experience that, for some years, I had never looked into a newspaper; nor, if I cared something for the movement made by nations from year to year, did I care one iota for their movement from week to week. Still, careless as I was on these subjects, it sounded as a novelty to me, and one which I had not dreamed of as a possibility, to hear men of education and liberal pursuits — men, besides, whom I regarded as so elevated in mind, and one of them as a person charmed and consecrated from error — giving utterance to sentiments which seemed absolutely disloyal. Yet now did I hear — and I heard with an emotion of sorrow, but a sorrow that instantly gave way to a conviction that it was myself who lay under a delusion, and simply because

——— 'from Abelard it came' —

opinions avowed most hostile to the reigning family; not personally to them, but generally to a monarchical form of government. And that I could not be mistaken in my impression, that my memory cannot have played me false, is evident, from one relic of the conversation which rested upon my ear and has survived to this day — thirty and two years from the time. It had been agreed, that no good was to be hoped for, as respected England, until the royal family should be expatriated; and Southey, jestingly considering to what country they could be exiled, with mutual benefit for that country and themselves, had supposed the case — that, with a large allowance of money, such as might stimulate beneficially the industry of a rising colony, they should be transported to New South Wales; which project, amusing his fancy, he had, with the readiness and facility that characterizes his mind, thrown *extempore* into

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verse; speaking off, as an improvisatore, about eight or ten lines, of which the three last I perfectly remember, and they were these, (by the way I should have mentioned, that they took the form of a petition addressed to the King: —)

> 'Therefore, old George, by George we pray
> Of thee forthwith to extend thy sway
> Over the great Botanic Bay.'

The sole doubt I have about the exact words regard the second line, which might have been (according to a various reading which equally clings to my ear) —

> 'That thou would'st please t' extend thy sway.'

But about the last I cannot be wrong; for I remember laughing with a sense of something peculiarly droll in the substitution of the stilted phrase — '*the great Botanic Bay*,' for our ordinary week-day name *Botany Bay*, so redolent of thieves and pickpockets.

Southey walked with us that morning for about five miles on our road towards Grasmere, which brought us to the southern side of Shoulthwaite Moss, and into the sweet solitary little vale of Legbesthwaite. And, by the way, he took leave of us at the gate of a house, one amongst the very few (five or six in all) just serving to redeem that valley from absolute solitude, which some years afterwards became, in a slight degree, remarkable to me from two little incidents by which it connected itself with my personal experiences. One was, perhaps, scarcely worth recording. It was simply this — that Wordsworth and myself having, through a long day's rambling, alternately walked and rode with a friend of his who happened to have a travelling carriage with him, and who was on his way to Keswick, agreed to wait hereabouts until Wordsworth's friend, in his abundant

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kindness, should send back his carriage to take us, on our return, to Grasmere, distant about eight miles. It was a lovely summer evening; but, as it had happened that we ate our breakfast early, and had eaten nothing at all throughout a long summer's day, we agreed to 'sorn' upon the goodman of the house, whoever he might happen to be, Catholic or Protestant, Jew, Gentile, or Mahometan, and to take any bone that he would be pleased to toss to such hungry dogs as ourselves. Accordingly we repaired to his gate; we knocked, and forthwith it was opened to us by a man-mountain, who listened benignantly to our humble request and ushered us into a comfortable parlor. All sorts of refreshments he continued to shower upon us for a space of two hours: it became evident that our introducer was the master of the house: we adored him in our thoughts as an earthly providence to hungry wayfarers; and we longed to make his acquaintance. But, for some inexplicable reason, that must continue to puzzle all future commentators on Wordsworth and his history, he never made his appearance. Could it be, we thought, that without the formality of a sign, he, in so solitary a region, more than twenty-five miles distant from Kendal, (the only town worthy of the name throughout the adjacent country,) exercised the functions of a landlord, and that we ought to pay him for his most liberal hospitality? Never was such a dilemma from the foundation of Legbesthwaite. To err, in either direction, was damnable: to go off without paying, if he *were* an innkeeper, made us swindlers; to offer payment, if he were not, and supposing that he had been inundating us with his hospitable bounties, simply in the character of a natural-born gentleman, made us the most unfeeling of mercenary ruffians. In the latter case we might expect a duel; in the former, of course, the treadmill. We were deliberat-

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ing on this sad alternative, and I, for my part, was voting in favor of the treadmill, when the sound of wheels was heard, and, in one minute, the carriage of his friend drew up to the farmer's gate. The crisis had now arrived, and we perspired considerably; when in came the frank Cumberland lass who had been our attendant. To her we propounded our difficulty — and lucky it was we did so, for she assured us that her master was an awful man, and would have 'brained' us both if we had insulted him with the offer of money. She, however, honored us by accepting the price of some female ornament.

I made a memorandum at the time, to ascertain the peculiar taste of this worthy Cumberland farmer, in order that I might, at some future opportunity, express my thanks to him for his courtesy; but, alas! for human resolutions, I have not done so to this moment; and is it likely that he, perhaps sixty years old at that time, (1813,) is alive at present, twenty-five years removed? Well, he *may* be; though I think *that* exceedingly doubtful, considering the next anecdote relating to the same house: — Two, or, it may be, three years after this time, I was walking to Keswick, from my own cottage, in Grasmere. The distance was thirteen miles; the time just nine o'clock; the night a cloudy moonlight, and intensely cold. I took the very greatest delight in these nocturnal walks, through the silent valleys of Cumberland and Westmoreland; and often at hours far later than the present. What I liked in this solitary rambling was, to trace the course of the evening through its household hieroglyphics, from the windows which I passed or saw; to see the blazing fires shining through the windows of houses, lurking in nooks far apart from neighbors; sometimes in solitudes that seemed abandoned to the owl, to catch the sounds of household mirth; then, some miles further, to perceive the time of

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going to bed; then the gradual sinking to silence of the house; then the drowsy reign of the cricket; at intervals, to hear church-clocks or a little solitary chapel-bell, under the brows of mighty hills, proclaiming the hours of the night, and flinging out their sullen knells over the graves where 'the rude forefathers of the hamlet slept' — where the strength and the loveliness of Elizabeth's time, or Cromwell's, and through so many fleeting generations that have succeeded, had long ago sunk to rest. Such was the sort of pleasure which I reaped in my nightly walks — of which, however, considering the suspicions of lunacy which it has sometimes awoke, the less I say, perhaps, the better. Nine o'clock it was — and deadly cold as ever March night was made by the keenest of black frosts, and by the bitterest of north winds — when I drew towards the gate of our huge and hospitable friend. A little garden there was before the house; and, in the centre of this garden was placed an arm-chair, upon which arm-chair was sitting composedly — but I rubbed my eyes, doubting the very evidence of my own eyesight — *a* or *the* huge man in his shirt-sleeves; yes, positively not sunning but *mooning* himself — apricating himself in the occasional moonbeams; and, as if simple star-gazing from a sedentary station, were not sufficient on such a night, absolutely pursuing his astrological studies, I repeat, in his shirt-sleeves! Could this be our hospitable friend, the man-mountain? Secondly, was it any man at all? Might it not be a scarecrow dressed up to frighten the birds? But from what — to frighten them from what, at that season of the year? Yet, again, it might be an ancient scarecrow — a superannuated scarecrow, far advanced in years. But still, why should a scarecrow, young or old, sit in an arm-chair? Suppose I were to ask. Yet, where was the use of asking a scarecrow? And, if not a scarecrow,

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where was the safety of speaking too inquisitively, on his own premises, to a man-mountain? The old dilemma of the duel or the treadmill, if I should intrude upon his grounds at night, occurred to me; and I watched the anomalous object in silence for some minutes. At length the monster (for such at any rate it was, scarecrow or not scarecrow) solemnly raised his hand to his face, perhaps taking a pinch of snuff, and thereby settled one question. But that settled, only irritated my curiosity the more; upon a second, what hallucination of the brain was it that could induce a living man to adopt so very absurd a line of conduct? Once I thought of addressing him thus:—Might I presume so far upon your known courtesy to way-faring strangers, as to ask—Is it the Devil who prompts you to sit in your shirt-sleeves, as if meditating a *camisade*, or to woo *al fresco* pleasures on such a night as this? But as Dr. Y., on complaining that, whenever he looked out of the window, he was sure to see Mr. X. lounging about the quadrangle, was effectually parried by Mr. X. retorting—that, whenever he lounged in the quadrangle, he was sure to see the Doctor looking out of the window; so did I anticipate a puzzling rejoinder from the former, with regard to my own motives for haunting the roads as a nocturnal tramper, without any rational object that I could make intelligible. I thought, also, of the fate which attended the Calendars, and so many other notorious characters in the 'Arabian Nights,' for unseasonable questions, or curiosity too vivacious. And, upon the whole, I judged it advisable to pursue my journey in silence, considering the time of night, the solitary place, and the fancy of our enormous friend for 'braining' those whom he regarded as ugly customers. And thus it came about that this one house has been loaded in my memory with a double mystery, that too probably never *can* be explained;

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and another torment has been prepared for the curious of future ages.

Of Southey, meantime, I had learned, upon this brief and hurried visit, so much in confirmation or in extension of my tolerably just preconceptions, with regard to his character and manners, as left me not a very great deal to add, and nothing at all to alter, through the many years which followed of occasional intercourse with his family, and domestic knowledge of his habits. A man of more serene and even temper, could not be imagined; nor more uniformly cheerful in his tone of spirits; nor more unaffectedly polite and courteous in his demeanor to strangers; nor more hospitable in his own wrong — I mean by the painful sacrifices, which hospitality entailed upon him, of time, so exceedingly precious that, during his winter and spring months of solitude, or whenever he was left absolute master of its distribution, every half hour in the day had its peculiar duty. In the still 'weightier matters of the law,' in cases that involved appeals to conscience and high moral principle, I believe Southey to be as exemplary a man as can ever have lived. Were it to his own instant ruin, I am satisfied that he would do justice and fulfil his duty under any possible difficulties, and through the very strongest temptations to do otherwise. For honor the most delicate, for integrity the firmest, and for generosity within the limits of prudence, Southey cannot well have a superior; and, in the lesser moralities — those which govern the daily habits, and transpire through the manners — he is certainly a better man — that is, (with reference to the minor principle concerned,) a more *amiable* man — than Wordsworth. He is less capable, for instance, of usurping an undue share of the conversation; he is more uniformly disposed to be charitable in his transient colloquial judgments upon doubtful actions of his neighbors;

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more gentle and winning in his condescensions to inferior knowledge or powers of mind; more willing to suppose it possible that he himself may have fallen into an error; more tolerant of avowed indifference towards his own writings, (though, by the way, I shall have something to offer in justification of Wordsworth, upon this charge;) and, finally, if the reader will pardon a violent instance of anti-climax, much more ready to volunteer his assistance in carrying a lady's reticule or parasol.

As a more *amiable* man, (taking that word partly in the French sense, partly also in the loftier English sense,) it might be imagined that Southey would be a more eligible companion than Wordsworth. But this is not so; and chiefly for three reasons which more than counterbalance Southey's greater amiability: *first*, because the natural reserve of Southey, which I have mentioned before, makes it peculiarly difficult to place yourself on terms of intimacy with him; *secondly*, because the range of his conversation is more limited than that of Wordsworth — dealing less with life and the interests of life — more exclusively with books; *thirdly*, because the style of his conversation is less flowing and diffusive — less expansive — more apt to clothe itself in a keen, sparkling, aphoristic form — consequently much sooner and more frequently coming to an abrupt close. A sententious, epigrammatic form of delivering opinions has a certain effect of *clenching* a subject, which makes it difficult to pursue it without a corresponding smartness of expression, and something of the same antithetic point and equilibration of clauses. Not that the reader is to suppose in Southey a showy master of rhetoric and colloquial sword-play, seeking to strike and to dazzle by his brilliant hits or adroit evasions. The very opposite is the truth. He seeks, indeed, to be effective, not for the sake of display, but as the readiest

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means of retreating from display, and the necessity for display: feeling that his station in literature and his laurelled honors make him a mark for the curiosity and interest of the company — that a standing appeal is constantly turning to him for his opinion — a latent call always going on for his voice on the question of the moment — he is anxious to comply with this requisition at as slight a cost as may be of thought and time. His heart is continually reverting to his wife, viz., his library; and that he may waste as little effort as possible upon his conversational exercises — that the little he wishes to say may appear pregnant with much meaning — he finds it advantageous, and, moreover, the style of his mind naturally prompts him, to adopt a trenchant, pungent, aculeated form of terse, glittering, stenographic sentences — sayings which have the air of laying down the law without any *locus penitentiæ* or privilege of appeal, but are not meant to do so: in short, aiming at brevity for the company as well as for himself, by cutting off all opening for discussion and desultory talk, through the sudden winding up that belongs to a sententious aphorism. The hearer feels that 'the record is closed;' and he has a sense of this result as having been accomplished by something like an oracular laying down of the law *ex cathedra:* but this is an indirect collateral impression from Southey's manner, and far from the one he meditates or wishes. An oracular manner he does certainly affect in certain dilemmas of a languishing or loitering conversation; not the peremptoriness, meantime, not the imperiousness of the oracle is what he seeks for, but its brevity, its dispatch, its conclusiveness.

Finally, as a fourth reason why Southey is less fitted for a genial companion than Wordsworth, his spirits have been, of late years, in a lower key than those of the latter. The tone of Southey's animal spirits was never

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at any time raised beyond the standard of an ordinary sympathy; there was in him no tumult, no agitation of passion; his organic and constitutional sensibilities were healthy, sound, perhaps strong — but not profound, not excessive. Cheerful he was, and animated at all times; but he levied no tributes on the spirits or the feelings beyond what all people could furnish. One reason why his bodily temperament never, like that of Wordsworth, threw him into a state of tumultuous excitement, which required intense and elaborate conversation to work off the excessive fervor, was, that, over and above his far less fervid constitution of mind and body, Southey rarely took any exercise; he led a life as sedentary, except for the occasional excursions in summer, (extorted from his sense of kindness and hospitality,) as that of a city tailor. And it was surprising to many people, who did not know by experience the prodigious effect upon the mere bodily health of regular and congenial mental labor, that Southey should be able to maintain health so regular, and cheerfulness so uniformly serene. Cheerful, however, he was, in those early years of my acquaintance with him; but it was manifest to a thoughtful observer, that his golden equanimity was bound up in a threefold chain, in a conscience clear of all offence, in the recurring enjoyments from his honorable industry, and in the gratification of his parental affections. If any one chord should give way, there (it seemed) would be an end to Southey's tranquillity. He had a son at that time, Herbert* Southey, a child in petticoats when I first knew

* Why he was called Herbert, if my young readers inquire, I must reply that I do not precisely know; because I know of reasons too many by half why he might have been so called. Derwent Coleridge, the second son of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and first cousin of Herbert Southey, was so called from the Lake of Keswick, commonly styled

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him, very interesting even then, but annually putting forth fresh blossoms of unusual promise, that made even indifferent people fear for the safety of one so finely organized, so delicate in his sensibilities, and so prematurely accomplished. As to his father, it became evident, that he lived almost in the light of young Herbert's smiles, and that the very pulses of his heart played in unison to the sound of his son's laughter. There was in his manner towards this child, and towards this only, something that marked an excess of delirious doating, perfectly unlike the ordinary chastened movements of Southey's affections; and something also, which indicated a vague fear about him; a premature unhappiness, as if already the inaudible tread of calamity could be perceived, as if already he had lost him; which, for the latter years of the boy's life, seemed to poison the blessing of his presence.

A stronger evidence I cannot give of Southey's trembling apprehensiveness about this child, than that the only rude thing I ever knew him to do, the only discourteous thing, was done on his account. A party of us, chiefly composed of Southey's family and his visiters, were in a sailboat upon the lake. Herbert was one of this party; and at that time not above five or six years old. In landing upon one of the islands, most of the gentlemen were occupied in assisting the ladies over the thwarts of the boat; and one gentleman, merely a stranger, observing this, good-naturedly took up Herbert in his arms, and

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Derwent Water, which gave the title of Earl to the noble and the noble-minded, though erring family of the Ratcliffes, who gave up, like heroes and martyrs, their lives and the finest estates in England, for one who was incapable of appreciating the service. One of the islands on this lake is dedicated to St. Herbert, and this *might* have given a name to Southey's first-born child. But it is more probable, that he derived this name from Dr. Herbert, uncle to the laureate.

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was stepping with him most carefully from thwart to thwart, when Southey, in a perfect frenzy of anxiety for his boy, his 'moon' as he used to call him, (I suppose from some pun of his own, or some mistake of the child's upon the equivocal word *sun*,) rushed forward, and tore him out of the arms of the stranger without one word of apology; nor, in fact, under the engrossing panic of the moment, lest an unsteady movement along with the rocking and undulating of the boat should throw his little boy overboard into the somewhat stormy waters of the lake, did Southey become aware of his own exceedingly discourteous action — fear for his boy quelled his very power of perception. That the stranger, on reflection, understood, a race of emotions travelled over his countenance. I saw the whole, a silent observer from the shore. First a hasty blush of resentment mingled with astonishment: then a good-natured smile of indulgence to the *naiveté* of the paternal feeling as displaying itself in the act, and the accompanying gestures of frenzied impatience; finally, a considerate, grave expression of acquiescence in the whole act; but with a pitying look towards father and son, as too probably destined under such agony of affection to trials perhaps insupportable. If I interpreted aright the stranger's feelings, he did not read their destinies amiss. Herbert became, with his growing years, a child of more and more hope; but, therefore, the object of more and more fearful solicitude. He read, and read; and he became at last

'A very learned youth' —

to borrow a line from his uncle's beautiful poem on the wild boy, who fell into a heresy, whilst living under the patronage of a Spanish grandee, and, finally, escaped from a probable martyrdom, by sailing up a great

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American river, wide as any sea, after which he was never heard of again. The learned youth of the river Greta had an earlier and more sorrowful close to his career. Possibly from want of exercise, combined with inordinate exercise of the cerebral organs, a disease gradually developed itself in the heart. It was not a mere disorder in the functions, it was a disease in the structure of the organ, and admitted of no permanent relief, consequently of no final hope. He died; and with him died for ever the golden hopes, the radiant felicity, and the internal serenity, of the unhappy father. It was from Southey himself, speaking without external signs of agitation, calmly, dispassionately, almost coldly, but with the coldness of a settled despondency, that I heard, whilst accompanying him through Grasmere on his road homewards to Keswick, from some visit he had been paying to Wordsworth at Rydal Mount, his settled feelings and convictions as connected with that loss; for him, in this world, he said, happiness there could be none; for that his tenderest affections, the very deepest by many degrees which he had ever known, were now buried in the grave with his youthful and too brilliant Herbert.

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CHAPTER XIV.

SOUTHEY, WORDSWORTH, AND COLERIDGE.

A CIRCUMSTANCE which, as much as anything, expounded to the very eye the characteristic distinctions between Wordsworth and Southey, and would not suffer a stranger to forget it for a moment, was the insignificant place and consideration allowed to the small book-collection of the former, contrasted with the splendid library of the latter. The two or three hundred volumes of Wordsworth occupied a little, homely, painted book-case, fixed into one of two shallow recesses, formed on each side of the fireplace by the projection of the chimney in the little sitting-room up stairs, which he had already described as his half kitchen and half parlor. They were ill bound, or not bound at all — in boards, sometimes in tatters; many were imperfect as to the number of volumes, mutilated as to the number of pages: sometimes, where it seemed worth while, the defects being supplied by manuscript; sometimes not: in short, everything showed that the books were for use, and not for show; and their limited amount showed that their possessor must have independent sources of enjoyment to fill up the major part of his time. In reality, when the weather was tolerable, I believe that Wordsworth rarely resorted to his books, (unless, perhaps, to some little pocket edition of a poet, which accompanied him in his rambles,) except in the evenings, or after

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he had tired himself by walking. On the other hand, Southey's collection occupied a separate room, the largest, and, every way, the most agreeable in the house; and this room was styled, and not ostentatiously, (for it really merited that name,) the library. The house itself, Greta Hall, stood upon a little eminence, (as I have before mentioned,) overhanging the river Greta. There was nothing remarkable in its internal arrangements: in all respects, it was a very plain unadorned family dwelling; large enough, by a little contrivance, to accommodate two, or, in some sense, three families, viz., Mr. Southey, and *his* family; Mr. Coleridge, and *his;* together with Mrs. Lovell, who, when her son was with her, might be said to compose a third. Mrs. Coleridge, Mrs. Southey, and Mrs. Lovell, were sisters; all having come originally from Bristol; and, as the different sets of children in this one house had each three several aunts, all the ladies, by turns, assuming that relation twice over, it was one of Southey's many amusing jests, to call the hill on which Greta Hall was placed, the *ant-hill.* Mrs. Lovell was the widow of Mr. Robert Lovell, who had published a volume of poems, in conjunction with Southey, somewhere about the year 1797, under the signatures of Bion and Moschus. This lady, having one only son, did not require any large suite of rooms; and the less so, as her son quitted her, at an early age, to pursue a professional education. The house had, therefore, been divided (not by absolute partition, into two distinct * apartments, but by an amicable distribution

* '*Into two distinct apartments.*' — The word apartment, meaning, in effect, a compartment of a house, already includes, in its proper sense, a suite of rooms; and it is a mere vulgar error, arising out of the ambitious usage of lodging-house keepers, to talk of one family or an establishment occupying apartments, in the plural. The Queen's apartment at St. James' or at Versailles — not the Queen's apartments — is the correct expression.

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of rooms) between the two families of Mr. Coleridge and Mr. Southey; Mr. Coleridge had a separate study, which was distinguished by nothing except by an organ amongst its furniture, and by a magnificent view from its window, (or windows,) if that could be considered a distinction, in a situation whose local necessities presented you with magnificent objects in whatever direction you might happen to turn your eyes.

In the morning, the two families might live apart; but they met at dinner, and in a common drawing-room; and Southey's library, in both senses of the word, was placed at the service of all the ladies alike. However, they did not intrude upon him, except in cases where they wished for a larger reception room, or a more interesting place for suggesting the topics of conversation. Interesting this room was, indeed, and in a degree not often rivalled. The library — the collection of books, I mean, which formed the most conspicuous part of its furniture within — was in all senses a good one. The books were chiefly English, Spanish, and Portuguese; well selected, being the great cardinal classics of the three literatures; fine copies, and decorated externally with a reasonable elegance, so as to make them in harmony with the other embellishments of the room. This effect was aided by the horizontal arrangement upon brackets, of many rare manuscripts — Spanish or Portuguese. Made thus gay within, this room stood in little need of attractions from without. Yet, even upon the gloomiest day of winter, the landscape from the different windows was too permanently commanding in its grandeur, too essentially independent of the seasons or the pomp of woods, to fail in fascinating the gaze of the coldest and dullest of spectators. The lake of Derwent Water in one direction, with its lovely islands — a lake about ten miles in circuit, and shaped pretty much like a boy's kite;

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the lake of Bassinthwaite in another; the mountains of Newlands arranging themselves like pavilions; the gorgeous confusion of Borrowdale just revealing its sublime chaos through the narrow vista of its gorge; all these objects lay in different angles to the front; whilst the sullen rear, not fully visible on this side of the house, was closed for many a league by the vast and towering masses of Skiddaw and Blencathara — mountains which are rather to be considered as frontier barriers, and chains of hilly ground, cutting the county of Cumberland into great chambers and different climates, than as insulated eminences; so vast is the area which they occupy; though there *are* also such separate and insulated heights, and nearly amongst the highest in the country. Southey's lot had therefore fallen, locally considered, into a goodly heritage. This grand panorama of mountain scenery, so varied, so expansive, and yet having the delightful feeling about it of a deep seclusion and dell-like sequestration from the world — a feeling which, in the midst of so expansive an area, spread out below his windows, could not have been sustained by any barriers less elevated than Glaramara, Skiddaw, or (which could be also descried) 'the mighty Helvellyn and Catchedicam;' this congregation of hill and lake, so wide, and yet so prison-like, in its separation from all beyond it, lay for ever under the eyes of Southey. His position locally, and, in some respects, intellectually, reminded one of Gibbon: but with great advantage in the comparison to Southey. The little town of Keswick and its adjacent lake bore something of the same relation to mighty London that Geneva and its lake may be thought to bear towards brilliant Paris. Southey, like Gibbon, was a miscellaneous scholar; he, like Gibbon, of vast historical research; he, like Gibbon, signally industrious, and patient, and elaborate in collecting the

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materials for his historical works. Like Gibbon, he had dedicated a life of competent ease, in a pecuniary sense, to literature; like Gibbon, he had gathered to the shores of a beautiful lake, remote from great capitals, a large, or, at least, sufficient library; (in each case, I believe, the library ranged, as to numerical amount, between seven and ten thousand;) and, like Gibbon, he was the most accomplished *litterateur* amongst the erudite scholars of his time, and the most of an erudite scholar amongst the accomplished *litterateurs*. After all these points of agreement known, it remains as a pure advantage on the side of Southey — a mere *lucro ponatur* — that he was a poet; and, by all men's confession, a respectable poet, brilliant in his descriptive powers, and fascinating in his narration, however much he might want of

'The vision and the faculty divine.'

It is remarkable amongst the series of parallelisms that have been or might be pursued between two men, both had the honor of retreating from a parliamentary life; Gibbon, after some silent and inert experience of that warfare; Southey, with a prudent foresight of the ruin to his health and literary usefulness, won from the experience his nearest friends.

I took leave of Southey in 1807, at the descent into the vale of Legbesthwaite, as I have already noticed. One year afterwards, I became a permanent resident in his neighborhood; and, although, on various accounts, my intercourse with him was at no time very strict, partly from the very uncongenial constitution of my own mind, and the different direction of my studies, partly from my reluctance to levy any tax on time so precious and so fully employed, I was yet on such terms for the next ten or

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eleven years, that I might, in a qualified sense, call myself his friend.

Yes! there were long years, through which Southey might respect me, I *him*. But the years came — for I have lived too long, reader, in relation to many things! and the report of me would have been better, or more uniform at least, had I died some twenty years ago — the years came in which circumstances made me an Opium-Eater; years through which a shadow as of sad eclipse sate and rested upon my faculties; years through which I was careless of all but those who lived within *my* inner circle, within 'my heart of hearts;' years — ah! heavenly years! — through which I lived, beloved, *with* thee, *to* thee, *for* thee, *by* thee! Ah! happy, happy years! in which I was a mere football of reproach, but in which every wind and sounding hurricane of wrath or contempt flew by like chasing enemies past some defying gates of adamant, and left me too blessed in thy smiles — angel of life! — to heed the curses or the mocking which sometimes I heard raving outside of our impregnable Eden. What any man said of me in those days, what he thought, did I ask? did I care? Then it was, or nearly then, that I ceased to see, cease to hear of Southey; as much abstracted from all which concerned the world outside, and from the Southeys, or even the Coleridges, in its van, as though I had lived with the darlings of my heart in the centre of Canadian forests, and all men else in the centre of Hindostan.

But, before I part from Greta Hall and its distinguished master, one word let me say, to protect myself from the imputation of sharing in some peculiar opinions of Southey with respect to political economy, which have been but too familiar to the world; and some opinions of the world, hardly less familiar, with respect to Southey himself and

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his accomplishments. Probably, with respect to the first, before this paper will be made public, I shall have sufficiently vindicated my own opinions in these matters by a distinct treatment of some great questions which lie at the base of all sound political economy; above all, the radical question of value, upon which no man has ever seen the full truth, except Mr. Ricardo; and, unfortunately, he had but little of the *polemic** skill which is required to meet the errors of his opponents. For it is noticeable, that the most conspicuous of those opponents, viz. Mr. Malthus, though too much, I fear, actuated by a spirit of jealousy, and, therefore, likely enough to have scattered sophistry and disingenuous quibbling over the subject, had no need whatever of any further confusion for darkening and perplexing his themes than what inevitably belonged to his own most chaotic understanding. He and Say, the Frenchman, were both plagued by understandings of the same quality — having a clear vision in shallow waters, and thus misleading them into the belief that they saw with equal clearness through the remote and the obscure; whereas, universally, their acuteness is like that of Hobbes — the gift of shallowness, and the result of *not* being subtle or profound enough to apprehend the true *locus* of the difficulty; and the barriers,

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* '*Polemic* skill.' — The word polemic is falsely interpreted by the majority of mere English readers. Having seldom seen it used except in a case of theological controversy, they fancy that it has some original and etymological appropriation to such a use: whereas it expresses, with regard to *all* subjects, without restriction, the functions of the debater as opposed to those of the original orator; the functions of him who meets error and unravels confusion or misrepresentation, opposed to those of him who lays down the abstract truth; truth absolute and without relation to the modes of viewing it. As well might the word *Radical* be limited to a political use as *Polemic* to controversial divinity.

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which to them limit the view, and give to it, together with the contraction, all the distinctness and definite outline of limitation, are, in nine cases out of ten, the product of their own defective and aberrating vision, and not real barriers at all.

Meantime, until I write fully and deliberately upon this subject, I shall observe, simply, that all 'the Lake Poets,' as they are called, were not only in error, but most presumptuously in error, upon these subjects. They were ignorant of every principle belonging to every question alike in political economy, and they were obstinately bent upon learning nothing; they were all alike too proud to acknowledge that any man knew better than they, unless it were upon some purely professional subject, or some art remote from all intellectual bearings, such as conferred no honor in its possession. Wordsworth was the least tainted with error upon political economy; and that because he rarely applied his thoughts to any question of that nature, and, in fact, despised every study of a moral or political aspect, unless it drew its materials from such revelations of truth as could be won from the *prima philosophia* of human nature approached with the poet's eye. Coleridge was the one whom Nature and his own multifarious studies had the best qualified for thinking justly on a theme such as this; but he also was shut out from the possibility of knowledge by presumption, and the habit of despising all the analytic studies of his own day — a habit for which he certainly had some warrant in the peculiar feebleness of all that has offered itself for *philosophy* in modern England. In particular, the religious discussions of the age, which touch inevitably at every point upon the profounder philosophy of man and his constitution, had laid bare the weakness of his own age to Coleridge's eye; and, because all was hollow and trivial in this

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direction, he chose to think that it was so in every other. And hence he has laid himself open to the just scoffs of persons far inferior to himself. In a foot-note in some late number of *The Westminster Review*, it is most truly asserted, (not in these words, but to this effect,) that Coleridge's 'Table Talk' exhibits a superannuation of error fit only for two centuries before. And what gave peculiar point to this display of ignorance was, that Coleridge did not, like Wordsworth, dismiss political economy from his notice, disdainfully, as a puerile tissue of truisms, or of falsehoods not less obvious, but actually addressed himself to the subject; fancied he had made discoveries in the science; and even promised us a systematic work on its whole compass.

To give a sample of this new and reformed political economy, it cannot well be necessary to trouble the reader with more than one chimera culled from those which Mr. Coleridge first brought forward in his early model of 'The Friend.' He there propounds, as an original hypothesis of his own, that taxation never burthens a people, or, as a mere possibility, *can* burthen a people, simply by its amount. And why? Surely it draws from the purse of him who pays his quota, a sum which may be very difficult or even ruinous for him to pay, were it no more important in a public point of view than as so much deducted from his own unproductive expenditure, and which may happen to have even a national importance if it should chance to be deducted from the funds destined to productive industry. What is Mr. Coleridge's answer to these little objections? Why, thus: the latter case he evades entirely, apparently not adverting to it as a case in any respect distinguished from the other; and this other — how is *that* answered? Doubtless, says Mr. Coleridge, it may be inconvenient to John or Samuel that a sum of

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money, otherwise disposable for their own separate uses, should be abstracted for the purchase of bayonets, or grape-shot; but with this, the public, the commonwealth, have nothing to do, any more than with the losses at a gaming-table, where A's loss is B's gain — the total funds of the nation remaining exactly the same. It is, in fact, nothing but the accidental distribution of the funds which is affected — possibly for the worse, (no other 'worse,' however, is contemplated than shifting it into hands less deserving,) but, also, by possibility, for the better: and the better and the worse may be well supposed, in the long run, to balance each other. And that this is Mr. Coleridge's meaning cannot be doubted, upon looking into his illustrative image in support of it: he says that money raised by Government in the shape of taxes is like moisture exhaled from the earth — doubtless, for the moment, injurious to the crops, but reacting abundantly for their final benefit when returning in the shape of showers. So natural, so obvious, so inevitable, by the way, is this conceit, (or, to speak less harshly, this hypothesis,) and so equally natural, obvious, and inevitable is the illustration from the abstraction and restoration of moisture, the exhalations and rains which affect this earth of ours, like the systole and diastole of the heart, the flux and reflux of the ocean, that precisely the same doctrine, and precisely the same exemplification of that doctrine, is to be found in a Parliamentary speech,* of some orator in the famous Long Parliament, about the year 1642. And to my mind it was a bitter humiliation to find, about 150 years afterwards, in a shallow French work, the famous '*Compte Rendu*' of the French Chan-

* Reported at length in a small quarto volume, of the well known quarto size so much in use for Tracts, Pamphlets, &c., throughout the life of Milton — 1608-73.

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cellor of the Exchequer, (Comptroller of the Finances) — Neckar — in that work, most humiliating it was to me, on a certain day, that I found this idle Coleridgian fantasy, not merely repeated, as it had been by scores — not merely anticipated by full twenty and two years, so that these French people had been beforehand with him, and had made Coleridge, to all appearance, their plagiarist, but also (hear it, ye gods!) answered, satisfactorily refuted, by this very feeble old sentimentalist, Neckar. Yes; positively Neckar, the slipshod old system-fancier and political driveller, had been so much above falling into the shallow snare, that he had, on sound principles, exposed its specious delusions.

Coleridge, the subtlest of men, in his proper walk, had brought forward, as a novel hypothesis of his own, in 1810, what Neckar, the rickety old charlatan, had scarcely condescended, in a hurried foot-note, to expose as a vulgar error and the shallowest of sophisms, in 1787 – 88. There was another enormous blunder which Coleridge was constantly authorizing, both in his writings and his conversation. Quoting a passage from Sir James Stuart, in which he speaks of a vine-dresser as adding nothing to the public wealth, unless his labor did something more than replace his own consumption — that is, unless it reproduced it together with a profit; he asks contemptuously, whether the happiness and moral dignity that may have been exhibited in the vine-dresser's family are to pass for nothing? And then he proceeds to abuse the economists, because they take no account of such important considerations. Doubtless these are invaluable elements of social grandeur, in a *total* estimate of those elements. But what has political economy to do with them, a science openly professing to insulate and to treat apart from all other constituents of national well-being,

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those which concern the production and circulation of wealth? * So far from gaining any thing by enlarging its field in the way demanded by Coleridge's critic, political economy would be as idly travelling out of the limits indicated and held forth in its very name, as if logic were to teach ethics, or ethics to teach diplomacy. With respect to the Malthusian doctrine of population, it is difficult to know who was the true proprietor of the arguments urged against it sometimes by Southey, sometimes by Coleridge. Those used by Southey are chiefly to be found up and down the *Quarterly Review*. But a more elaborate attack was published by Hazlitt; and this must be supposed to speak the peculiar objections of Coleridge, for he was in the habit of charging Hazlitt with having pillaged his conversation, and occasionally garbled it throughout the whole of this book. One single argument there was, undoubtedly just, and it was one which others stumbled upon no less than Coleridge, exposing the fallacy of the supposed different laws of increase for vegetable and animal life. But though this frail prop withdrawn

* In fact, the exposure is as perfect in the case of an individual as in that of a nation, and more easily apprehended. Levy from an individual clothier £1000 in taxes, and afterwards return to him the whole of this sum in payment for the clothing of a regiment. Then, supposing profits to be at the rate of 15 per cent., he will have replaced £150 of his previous loss; even his gains will simply reinstate him in something that he had lost, and the remaining £850 will continue to be a dead loss; since the £850 restored to him, exactly replaces, by the terms of this case, his disbursements in wages and materials; if it did more, profits would not be at 15 per cent., according to the supposition. But Government may spend *more* than the £1000 with this clothier; they may spend £10,000. Doubtless, and in that case, on the same supposition as to profits, he will receive £1500 as a nominal gain; and £500 will be a real gain, marked with the positive sign, (+.) But such a case would only prove, that nine other tax-payers, to an equal amount, had been left without any reimbursement at all. Strange, that so clear a case for an individual, should become obscure when it regards a nation.

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took away from Mr. Malthus's theory all its scientific rigor, the main *practical* conclusions were still valid as respected any argument from the lakers; for the strongest of these arguments that ever came to my knowledge was a mere appeal — not *ad verecundiam*, in the ordinary sense of the phrase, but *ad honestatem*, as if it were shocking to the *honestum* of Roman ethics, (the *honnêteté* of French minor ethics,) that the check derived from self-restraint should not be supposed amply competent to redress all the dangers from a redundant population, under any certain knowledge generally diffused that such dangers existed. But these are topics which it is sufficient in this place to have noticed, *currente calamo*. I was anxious however to protest against the probable imputation, that I, because generally so intense an admirer of these men, adopted their blind and hasty reveries in political economy.

There were (and perhaps more justly I might say there *are*) two other notions currently received about Southey, one of which is altogether erroneous, and the other true only in a limited sense. The first is, the belief that he belonged to what is known as the lake school in poetry; with respect to which all that I need say in this place, is involved in his own declaration frankly made to myself in Easedale, during the summer of 1812; that he considered Wordsworth's theory of poetic diction, and still more his principles as to the selection of subjects, and as to what constituted a poetic treatment, as founded on error. There is certainly some community of phraseology between Southey and the other lakers, naturally arising out of their joint reverence for Scriptural language: this was a field in which they met in common: else it shows but little discernment and power of valuing the essences of things, to have classed Southey in the same school

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with Wordsworth and Coleridge. The other popular notion about Southey, which I conceive to be expressed with much too little limitation, regards his style. He has been praised, and justly, for his plain, manly, unaffected English, until the parrot echoers of other men's judgments, who adopt all they relish with undistinguishing blindness, have begun to hold him up as a great master of his own language, and a classical model of fine composition. Now, if the error were only in the degree, it would not be worth while to notice it; but the truth is, that Southey's defects in this particular power, are as striking as his characteristic graces. Let a subject arise — and almost in any path, there is a ready possibility that it should — in which a higher tone is required, of splendid declamation, or of impassionate fervor, and Southey's style will immediately betray its want of the loftier qualities as flagrantly as it now asserts its powers in that unpretending form, which is best suited to his level character of writing and his humbler choice of themes. It is to mistake the character of Southey's mind, which is elevated but not sustained by the higher modes of enthusiasm, to think otherwise. Were a magnificent dedication required, moving with a stately and measured solemnity, and putting forward some majestic pretensions, arising out of a long and laborious life; were a pleading required against some capital abuse of the earth — war, slavery, oppression in its thousand forms; were a *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano* required; Southey's is not the mind, and, by a necessary consequence, Southey's is not the style, for carrying such purposes into full and memorable effect. His style is *therefore* good, because it has been suited to his themes; and those themes have hitherto been either narrative, which usually imposes a modest diction, and a modest structure of sentences, or

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argumentative in that class which is too overburthened with details, with replies, with interruption, and every mode of discontinuity, to allow a thought of eloquence, or of the periodic style which a perfect eloquence instinctively seeks.

I here close my separate notice of the Lake Poets — meaning those three who were originally so denominated — three men upon whom posterity, in every age, will look back with interest as profound as, perhaps, belongs to any other names of our era; for it happens, not unfrequently, that the *personal* interest in the author is not in the direct ratio of that which belongs to his works: and the character of an author, better qualified to command a vast popularity for the creations of his pen, is oftentimes more of a universal character, less peculiar, less fitted to stimulate the curiosity, or to sustain the sympathy of the intellectual, than the profounder and more ascetic solemnity of a Wordsworth, or the prodigal and magnificent eccentricities of a Coleridge. With respect to both of these gifted men, some interesting notices still remain in arrear; but these will more properly come forward in their natural places, as they happen to arise in after years in connection with my own memoirs.

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CHAPTER XV.

RECOLLECTIONS OF GRASMERE.

I NOW resume my memoirs, from the moment of my leaving Wordsworth's cottage, after one week of delightful intercourse with him and his sister, about the 12th of November, 1807.

Soon after my return to Oxford, I received a letter from Miss Wordsworth, asking for any subscriptions I might succeed in obtaining, amongst my college friends, in aid of the funds then raising in behalf of an orphan family, who had become such by an affecting tragedy that had occurred within a few weeks from my visit to Grasmere.

This calamitous incident, interesting for itself as well as for having drawn forth some beautiful stanzas from Wordsworth, had a separate and peculiar importance in reference to my own life — having been the remote occasion of another misfortune that brought to myself the first deep draught from the cup of sorrow which it was destined that I should drink. Miss Wordsworth drew up a brief memoir of the whole affair. This, I believe, went into the hands of the royal family; at any rate, the august ladies of that house (all or some of them) were amongst the many subscribers to the orphan children; and it must be satisfactory to all who shared, and happen to recollect their own share in that seasonable work of charity, that the money then collected under the auspices of the Wordsworths, proved sufficient, with judicious

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administration and superintendence from a committee of the neighboring ladies in Ambleside, to educate and settle respectably, in useful callings, the whole of a very large family, not one of whom, to my knowledge, has fared otherwise than prosperously, or, to speak of the very lowest case, decently in their subsequent lives, as men and women, long since surrounded by children of their own. Miss Wordsworth's simple but fervid memoir not being within my reach at this moment, I must trust to my own recollections and my own less personal impressions to retrace the story; which, after all, is not much of a story to excite or to impress, unless for those who can find a sufficient interest in the trials and unhappy fate of hard-working peasants, and can reverence the fortitude which, being lodged in so frail a tenement as the person of a little girl, not much, if anything, above nine years old, could face an occasion of sudden mysterious abandonment — of uncertain peril — and could tower up, during one night, into the perfect energies of womanhood — energies unsuspected even by herself — under the mere pressure of difficulty, and the sense of new-born responsibilities awfully bequeathed to her, and in the most lonely, perhaps, of all English habitations.

The little valley of Easedale, which, and the neighborhood of which, were the scenes of these interesting events, is, on its own account, one of the most impressive solitudes amongst the mountains of the lake district; and I must pause to describe it. Easedale is impressive, *first*, *as* a solitude; for the depth of the seclusion is brought out and forced more pointedly upon the feelings by the thin scattering of houses over its sides, and the surface of what may be called its floor. These are not above five or six at the most; and one, the remotest of the whole, was untenanted for all the thirty years of my acquaintance

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with the place. *Secondly*, it is impressive from the excessive loveliness which adorns its little area. This is broken up into small fields and miniature meadows, separated not — as too often happens, with sad injury to the beauty of the lake country — by stone walls, but sometimes by little hedge-rows, sometimes by little sparkling, pebbly 'beck,' lustrous to the very bottom, and not too broad for a child's flying leap; and sometimes by wild self-sown woodlands of birch, alder, holly, mountain ash, and hazel, that meander through the valley, intervening the different estates with natural sylvan marches, and giving cheerfulness in winter, by the bright scarlet of their barrier. It is the character of all the northern English valleys, as I have already remarked — and it is a character first noticed by Wordsworth, that they assume, in their bottom areas, the level floor-like shape, making everywhere a direct angle with the surrounding hills, and definitely marking out the margin of their outlines; whereas the Welsh valleys have too often the glaring imperfection of the basin shape, which allows no sense of any absolute valley surface: the hills are already commencing at the very centre of what is called the level area. The little valley of Easedale is, in this respect, as highly finished as in every other; and in the Westmoreland spring, which may be considered May and the earlier half of June, whilst the grass in the meadows is yet short from the habit of keeping the sheep on it until a much later period than elsewhere, (viz., until the mountains are so far cleared of snow, and the probability of storms, as to make it safe to send them out on their summer migration,) the little fields in Easedale have the most lawny appearance, and, from the humidity of the Westmoreland* climate, the most verdant

* It is pretty generally known, perhaps, that Westmoreland and Devonshire are the two rainiest counties in England. At Kirkby Lonsdale,

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that it is possible to imagine; and on a gentle vernal day — when vegetation has been far enough advanced to bring out the leaves, an April sun gleaming coyly through the clouds, and genial April rain gently pencilling the light spray of the woods with tiny pearl drops — I have often thought, whilst looking with silent admiration upon this exquisite composition of landscape, with its miniature fields, running up like forest glades into miniature woods; its little columns of smoke, breathing up like incense to the household gods, from the hearths of two or three picturesque cottages — abodes of simple primitive manners, and what, from personal knowledge, I will call humble virtue — whilst my eyes rested on this charming combination of lawns and shrubberies, I have thought that, if a scene on this earth could deserve to be sealed up, like the valley of Rasselas, against the intrusion of the world — if there were one to which a man would willingly surrender himself a prisoner for the years of a long life — that it is this Easedale — which would justify the choice, and recompense the sacrifice. But there is a third advantage possessed by this Easedale, above other rival valleys, in the sublimity of its mountain barriers. In one of its many rocky recesses is seen a 'force,' (such is the local name for a cataract,) white with foam, descending at all seasons with respectable strength, and, after the melting of snows, with an Alpine violence. Follow the leading of this 'force' for three quarters of a mile, and you come to a little mountain lake, locally termed a 'tarn,'* the very

lying just on the outer margin of the Lake district, one-fifth more rain is computed to fall than in the adjacent counties on the same side of England. But it is also notorious, that the western side of the island universally is more rainy than the east. Collins call it the Showery West.

* A tarn is a lake, generally (indeed always) a small one: and always, as I think, (but this I have heard disputed,) lying above the level of the

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finest and most gloomy sublime of its class. From this tarn it was, I doubt not, though applying it to another, that Wordsworth drew the circumstances of his general description: —

> 'Thither the rainbow comes, the cloud,
> And mists that spread the flying shroud;
> And winds
> That, if they could, would hurry past:
> But that enormous barrier binds it fast.
> &c. &c. &c.
> The rocks repeat the raven's croak,
> In symphony austere.'

And far beyond this 'enormous barrier,' that thus imprisons the very winds, tower upwards the aspiring heads (usually enveloped in cloud and mist) of Glaramara, Bow Fell, and the other fells of Langdale Head and Borrowdale. Finally, superadded to the other circumstances of solitude, arising out of the rarity of human life, and of the signs which mark the goings on of human life — two other accidents there are of Easedale, which sequester it from the world, and intensify its depth of solitude beyond what could well be looked for or thought possible in any vale within a district so beaten by modern tourists. One is, that it is a chamber within a chamber, or rather a closet within a chamber — a chapel within a cathedral — a little private oratory within a chapel. For Easedale is, in fact, a dependency of Grasmere — a little recess lying within the same general basin of mountains, but partitioned off by a screen of rock and swelling uplands, so inconsidera-

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inhabited valleys and the large lakes; and subject to this further condition, as first noticed by Wordsworth, that it has no main feeder. Now, this latter accident of the tarn at once explains and authenticates my account of the word, viz. — that it is the Danish word taaren, (*a trickling;*) a deposit of waters from the weeping of rain down the smooth faces of the rocks.

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ble in height, that, when surveyed from the commanding summits of Fairfield or Seat Sandal, they seem to subside into the level area, and melt into the general surface. But, viewed from below, these petty heights form a sufficient partition; which is pierced, however, in two points — once by the little murmuring brook threading its silvery line onwards to the lake of Grasmere, and again by a little rough lane, barely capable (and I think not capable in all points) of receiving a post-chaise. This little lane keeps ascending amongst wooded steeps for a quarter of a mile; and then, by a downward course of a hundred yards or so, brings you to a point at which the little valley suddenly bursts upon you with as full a revelation of its tiny proportions, as the traversing of the wooded back-grounds will permit. The lane carries you at last to a little wooden bridge, practicable for pedestrians; but, for carriages, even the doubtful road, already mentioned, ceases altogether: and this fact, coupled with the difficulty of suspecting such a lurking paradise from the high road through Grasmere, at every point of which the little hilly partition crowds up into one mass with the capital barriers in the rear, seeming, in fact, not so much to blend with them as to be a part of them, may account for the fortunate neglect of Easedale in the tourist's route; and also because there is no one separate object, such as a lake or a splendid cataract, to bribe the interest of those who are hunting after sights; for the 'force' is comparatively small, and the tarn is beyond the limits of the vale, as well as difficult of approach.

One other circumstance there is about Easedale, which completes its demarcation, and makes it as entirely a land-locked little park, within a ring fence of mountains, as ever human art, if rendered capable of dealing with mountains and their arrangement, could have contrived.

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The sole approach, as I have mentioned, is from Grasmere; and some *one* outlet there must inevitably be in every vale that can be interesting to a human occupant, since without water it would not be habitable; and running water must force an exit for itself, and, consequently, an inlet for the world; but, properly speaking, there is no other. For, when you explore the remoter end of the vale, at which you suspect some communication with the world outside, you find before you a most formidable amount of climbing, the extent of which can hardly be measured where there is no solitary object of human workmanship or vestige of animal life, not a sheep-track even, not a shepherd's hovel, but rock and heath, heath and rock, tossed about in monotonous confusion. And, after the ascent is mastered, you descend into a second vale — long, narrow, sterile, known by the name of 'Far Easedale:' from which point, if you could drive a tunnel below the everlasting hills, perhaps six or seven miles might bring you to the nearest habitation of man, in Borrowdale; but, crossing the mountains, the road cannot be less than twelve or fourteen, and, in point of fatigue, at the least twenty. This long valley, which is really terrific at noon-day, from its utter loneliness and desolation, completes the defences of little sylvan Easedale. There is one door into it from the Grasmere side; but that door is hidden; and on every other quarter there is no door at all, nor any, the roughest, access, but what would demand a day's walking.

Such is the solitude — so deep, so seventimes guarded, and so rich in miniature beauty — of Easedale; and in this solitude it was that George and Sarah Green, two poor and hard-working peasants, dwelt, with a numerous family of small children. Poor as they were, they had won the general respect of the neighborhood, from the

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uncomplaining firmness with which they bore the hardships of their lot, and from the decent attire in which the good mother of the family contrived to send out her children to the Grasmere school. It is a custom, and a very ancient one, in Westmoreland — and I have seen the same usage prevailing in southern Scotland — that any sale by auction, whether of cattle, of farming produce, farming stock, wood, or household furniture — and seldom a fortnight passes without something of the sort — forms an excuse for the good women, throughout the whole circumference of perhaps a dozen valleys, to assemble at the place of sale with the nominal purpose of aiding the sale, or of buying something they may happen to want. No doubt, the real business of the sale attracts numbers; although of late years — that is, for the last twenty-five years, through which so many sales of furniture the most expensive, (hastily made by casual settlers, on the wing for some fresher novelty,) — have made this particular article almost a drug in the country; and the interest in such sales has greatly declined. But, in 1807, this fever of founding villas or cottages *ornées*, was yet only beginning; and a sale, except it were of the sort exclusively interesting to farming men, was a kind of general intimation to the country, from the owner of the property, that he would, on that afternoon, be 'at home' for all comers, and hoped to see as large an attendance as possible. Accordingly, it was the almost invariable custom — and often, too, when the parties were far too poor for such an effort of hospitality — to make ample provision, not of eatables, but of liquor, for all who came. Even a gentleman, who should happen to present himself on such a festal occasion, by way of seeing the 'humors' of the scene, was certain of meeting the most cordial welcome. The good woman of the house more particu-

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larly testified her sense of the honor done to her house, and was sure to seek out some cherished and solitary article of china — a wreck from a century back — in order that he, being a porcelain man amongst so many delf men and women, might have a porcelain cup to drink from.

The main secret of attraction at these sales — many a score of which I have attended — was the social rendezvous thus effected between parties so remote from each other, (either by real distance, or by the virtual distance which results from a separation by difficult tracts of hilly country,) that, in fact, without some such common object, and oftentimes something like a bisection of the interval between them, they would not be likely to hear of each other for months, or actually to meet for years. This principal charm of the 'gathering,' seasoned, doubtless, to many by the certain anticipation that the whole budget of rural scandal would then and there be opened, was not assuredly diminished to the men by the anticipation of excellent ale, (usually brewed six or seven weeks before, in preparation for the event,) and possibly of still more excellent *pow-sowdy*, (a combination of ale, spirits, and spices;) nor to the women by some prospect, not so inevitably fulfilled, but pretty certain in a liberal house, of communicating their news over excellent tea. Even the auctioneer was always 'part and parcel' of the mirth: he was always a rustic old humorist, a 'character,' and a jovial drunkard, privileged in certain good-humored liberties and jokes with all bidders, gentle or simple, and furnished with an ancient inheritance of jests appropriate to the articles offered for sale — jests that had, doubtless, done their office from Elizabeth's golden days; but no more, on that account, failed of their expected effect, with either man or woman of this nineteenth century,

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than the sun fails to gladden the heart because it is that same old obsolete sun that has gladdened it for thousands of years.

One thing, however, in mere justice to the poor indigenous Dalesmen of Westmoreland and Cumberland, I am bound, in this place, to record, that, often as I have been at these sales, and through many a year before even a scattering of gentry began to attend, yet so true to the natural standard of politeness was the decorum uniformly maintained, even the old buffoon (as sometimes he was) of an auctioneer never forgot himself so far as to found upon any article of furniture a jest that could have called up a painful blush in any woman's face. He might, perhaps, go so far as to awaken a little rosy confusion upon some young bride's countenance, when pressing a cradle upon her attention; but never did I hear him utter, nor would he have been tolerated in uttering, a scurrilous or disgusting jest, such as might easily have been suggested by something offered at a household sale. Such jests as these I heard, for the first time, at a sale in Grasmere in 1814; and, I am ashamed to say it, from some 'gentlemen' of a great city. And it grieved me to see the effect, as it expressed itself upon the manly faces of the grave Dalesmen — a sense of insult offered to their women, who met in confiding reliance upon the forbearance of the men, and upon their regard for the dignity of the female sex, this feeling struggling with the habitual respect they are inclined to show towards what they suppose gentle blood and superior education. Taken generally, however, these were the most picturesque and festal meetings which the manners of the country produced. There you saw all ages and both sexes assembled: there you saw old men whose heads would have been studies for Guido: there you saw the most colossal

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and stately figures amongst the young men that England has to show; there the most beautiful young women. There it was that sometimes I saw a lovelier face than ever I shall see again: there it was that local peculiarities of usage or of language were best to be studied; there — at least in the earlier years of my residence in that district — that the social benevolence, the grave wisdom, the innocent mirth, and the neighborly kindness of the people, most delightfully expanded and expressed themselves with the least reserve.

To such a scene it was, to a sale of domestic furniture at the house of some proprietor on the point of giving up housekeeping, perhaps in order to live with a married son or daughter, that George and Sarah Green set forward in the forenoon of a day fated to be their last on earth. The sale was to take place in Langdalehead; to which, from their own cottage in Easedale, it was possible in daylight, and supposing no mist upon the hills, to find out a short cut of not more than eight miles. By this route they went; and, notwithstanding the snow lay on the ground, they reached their destination in safety. The attendance at the sale must have been diminished by the rigorous state of the weather; but still the scene was a gay one as usual. Sarah Green, though a good and worthy woman in her maturer years, had been imprudent and — as the tender consideration of the country is apt to express it — 'unfortunate' in her youth. She had an elder daughter, who was illegitimate; and I believe the father of this girl was dead. The girl herself was grown up; and the peculiar solicitude of poor Sarah's maternal heart was at this time called forth on *her* behalf: she wished to see her placed in a very respectable house, where the mistress was distinguished for her notable qualities and her success in forming good servants. This

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object, so important to Sarah Green in the narrow range of her cares, as, in a more exalted family it might be to obtain a ship for a lieutenant that had passed as master and commander, or to get him 'posted' — occupied her almost throughout the sale. A doubtful answer had been given to her application; and Sarah was going about the crowd, and weaving her person in and out in order to lay hold of this or that intercessor who might have, or might seem to have, some weight with the principal person concerned.

This was the last occupation which is known to have stirred the pulses of her heart. An illegitimate child is everywhere, even in the indulgent society of Westmoreland dalesmen, under some shade of discountenance; so that Sarah Green might consider her duty to be the stronger towards the child of her 'misfortune.' And she probably had another reason for her anxiety — as some words dropped by her on this evening led people to presume — in her conscientious desire to introduce her daughter into a situation less perilous than that which had compassed her own youthful steps with snares. If so, it is painful to know that the virtuous wish, whose

'———————— vital warmth
Gave the last human motion to the heart,'

should not have been fulfilled. She was a woman of ardent and affectionate spirit, of which Miss Wordsworth's memoir, or else her subsequent memorials in conversation, (I forget which,) gave some circumstantial and affecting instances, which I cannot now recall with accuracy. This ardor it was, and her impassioned manner, that drew attention to what she did; for, otherwise, she was too poor a person to be important in the estimation of strangers, and, of all possible situations, to

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be important at a sale, where the public attention was naturally fixed upon the chief purchasers, and the attention of the purchasers upon the chief competitors. Hence it happened, that, after she ceased to challenge notice by the emphasis of her solicitations for her daughter, she ceased to be noticed at all; and nothing was recollected of her subsequent behavior until the time arrived for general separation. This time was considerably after sunset; and the final recollections of the crowd with respect to George and Sarah Green, were, that, upon their intention being understood to retrace their morning path, and to attempt the perilous task of dropping down into Easedale from the mountains above Langdale Head, a sound of remonstrance arose from many quarters. However, at a moment when everybody was in the hurry of departure — and, to persons of their mature age, the opposition could not be very obstinate — party after party rode off; the meeting melted away, or, as the northern phrase is, *scaled*;* and, at length, nobody was left of any weight that could pretend to influence the decision of elderly people. They quitted the scene, professing to obey some advise or other upon the choice of roads; but, at as early a point as they could do so unobserved, began to ascend the hills, everywhere open from the rude carriage way. After this, they were seen no more. They had disappeared into the cloud of death. Voices were heard, some hours afterwards, from the mountains — voices, as some thought, of alarm; others said, no —

* *Scaled* — *scale* is a verb both active and neuter. I use it here as a neuter verb, in the sense (a Cumberland sense) of separating to all the thirty-two points of the compass. But by Shakspeare it is used in an active or transitive sense. Speaking of some secret news, he says — 'We 'll scale it a little more,' *i. e.*, spread it in all directions.

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that it was only the voices of jovial people, carried by the wind into uncertain regions. The result was, that no attention was paid to the sounds.

That night, in little peaceful Easedale, six children sat by a peat fire, expecting the return of their parents, upon whom they depended for their daily bread. Let a day pass, and they were starved. Every sound was heard with anxiety; for all this was reported many a hundred times to Miss Wordsworth, and those who, like myself, were never wearied of hearing the details. Every sound, every echo amongst the hills was listened to for five hours — from seven to twelve. At length, the eldest girl of the family — about nine years old — told her little brothers and sisters to go to bed. They had been taught obedience; and all of them, at the voice of their eldest sister, went off fearfully to their beds. What could be *their* fears, it is difficult to say; they had no knowledge to instruct them in the dangers of the hills; but the eldest sister always averred that they had a deep solicitude, as she herself had, about their parents. Doubtless she had communicated her fears to *them*. Some time, in the course of the evening — but it was late and after midnight — the moon arose and shed a torrent of light upon the Langdale fells, which had already, long hours before, witnessed in darkness the death of their parents. It may be well here to cite Mr. Wordsworth's stanzas: —

'Who weeps for strangers? Many wept
For George and Sarah Green;
Wept for that pair's unhappy fate,
Whose graves may here be seen.

By night, upon these stormy fells,
Did wife and husband roam;
Six little ones at home had left,
And could not find that home.

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For *any* dwellingplace of man
As vainly did they seek.
He perished; and a voice was heard —
The widow's lonely shriek.

Not many steps, and she was left
A body without life —
A few short steps were the chain that bound
The husband to the wife.

Now do these sternly-featured hills
Look gently on this grave;
And quiet now are the depths of air,
As a sea without a wave.

But deeper lies the heart of peace
In quiet more profound;
The heart of quietness is here
Within this churchyard bound.

And from all agony of mind
It keeps them safe, and far
From fear and grief, and from all need
Of sun or guiding star.

O darkness of the grave! how deep,
After that living night —
That last and dreary living one
Of sorrow and affright!

O sacred marriage-bed of death,
That keeps them side by side
In bond of peace, in bond of love,
That may not be untied!'

That night, and the following morning, came a further and a heavier fall of snow; in consequence of which the poor children were completely imprisoned, and cut off from all possibility of communicating with their next neighbors. The brook was too much for them to leap; and the little, crazy, wooden bridge could not be crossed or even approached with safety, from the drifting of the

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snow having made it impossible to ascertain the exact situation of some treacherous hole in its timbers, which, if trod upon, would have let a small child drop through into the rapid waters. Their parents did not return. For some hours of the morning, the children clung to the hope that the extreme severity of the night had tempted them to sleep in Langdale; but this hope forsook them as the day wore away. Their father, George Green, had served as a soldier, and was an active man, of ready resources, who would not, under any circumstances, have failed to force a road back to his family, had he been still living; and this reflection, or rather semi-conscious feeling, which the awfulness of their situation forced upon the minds of all but the mere infants, taught them to feel the extremity of their danger. Wonderful it is to see the effect of sudden misery, sudden grief, or sudden fear, (where they do not utterly upset the faculties,) in sharpening the intellectual perceptions. Instances must have fallen in the way of most of us. And I have noticed frequently that even sudden and intense bodily pain is part of the machinery employed by nature for quickening the development of the mind. The perceptions of infants are not, in fact, excited *gradatim* and continuously, but *per saltum*, and by unequal starts. At least, in the case of my own children, one and all, I have remarked, that, after any very severe fit of those peculiar pains to which the delicate digestive organs of most infants are liable, there always become apparent on the following day a very considerable increase of vital energy and of vivacious attention to the objects around them. The poor desolate children of Blentarn Ghyll,* hourly becoming

* Wordsworth's conjecture as to the origin of the name is probably the true one. There is, at a little elevation above the place, a small concave tract of ground, shaped like the bed of a tarn. Some causes

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more ruefully convinced that they were orphans, gave many evidences of this awaking power, as lodged, by a providential arrangement, in situations of trial that most require it. They huddled together, in the evening, round their hearth-fire of peats, and held their little councils upon what was to be done towards any chance — if chance remained — of yet giving aid to their parents; for a slender hope had sprung up that some hovel or sheep-fold might have furnished them a screen (or, in Westmoreland phrase, a *bield*) against the weather quarter of the storm, in which hovel they might be lying disabled or snowed up; and, secondly, as regarded themselves, in what way they were to make known their situation, in case the snow should continue or increase; for starvation stared them in the face, if they should be confined for many days to their house.

Meantime, the eldest sister, little Agnes, though sadly alarmed, and feeling the sensation of *eariness* as twilight came on, and she looked out from the cottage door to the dreadful fells, on which, too probably, her parents were lying corpses, (and possibly not many hundred yards from their own threshold), yet exerted herself to take all the measures which their own prospects made prudent. And she told Miss Wordsworth, that, in the midst of the oppression on her little spirit, from vague ghostly terrors, she did not fail, however, to draw some comfort from the consideration, that the very same causes which produced their danger in one direction, sheltered them from danger of another kind — such dangers as she knew, from books

having diverted the supplies of water, at some remote period, from the little reservoir, the tarn has consequently disappeared; but the bed, and other indications of a tarn, (particularly a little ghyll, or steep rocky cleft for discharging the water,) having remained as memorials that it once existed, the country people have called it the Blind Tarn.

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that she had read, would have threatened a little desolate flock of children in other parts of England; that, if they could not get out into Grasmere, on the other hand, bad men, and wild seafaring foreigners, who sometimes passed along the high road in that vale, could not get to them; and that, as to their neighbors, so far from having anything to fear in that quarter, their greatest apprehension was lest they might not be able to acquaint them with their situation; but that, if that could be accomplished, the very sternest amongst them were kind-hearted people, that would contend with each other for the privilege of assisting them. Somewhat cheered with these thoughts, and having caused all her brothers and sisters — except the two little things, not yet of a fit age — to kneel down and say the prayers which they had been taught, this admirable little maiden turned herself to every household task that could have proved useful to them in a long captivity. First of all, upon some recollection that the clock was nearly going down, she wound it up. Next, she took all the milk which remained from what her mother had provided for the children's consumption during her absence, and for the breakfast of the following morning — this luckily was still in sufficient plenty for two days' consumption, (skimmed or 'blue' milk being only one half-penny a quart, and the quart a most redundant one, in Grasmere) — this she took and scalded, so as to save it from turning sour. That done, she next examined the meal chest; made the common oatmeal porridge of the country, (the burgoo of the royal navy;) but put all of the children, except the two youngest, on short allowance; and, by way of reconciling them in some measure to this stinted meal, she found out a little hoard of flour, part of which she baked for them upon the hearth into little cakes; and this unusual delicacy persuaded them to think that they had been celebrating a

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feast. Next, before night coming on should make it too trying to her own feelings, or before fresh snow coming on might make it impossible, she issued out of doors. There her first task was, with the assistance of two younger brothers, to carry in from the peatstack as many peats as might serve them for a week's consumption. That done, in the second place, she examined the potatoes, buried in 'brackens,' (that is, withered fern:) these were not many; and she thought it better to leave them where they were, excepting as many as would make a single meal, under a fear that the heat of their cottage would spoil them, if removed.

Having thus made all the provision in her power for supporting their own lives, she turned her attention to the cow. Her she milked; but, unfortunately, the milk she gave, either from being badly fed, or from some other cause, was too trifling to be of much consideration towards the wants of a large family. Here, however, her chief anxiety was to get down the hay for the cow's food from a loft above the outhouse: and in this she succeeded but imperfectly, from want of strength and size to cope with the difficulties of the case; besides that the increasing darkness by this time, together with the gloom of the place, made it a matter of great self-conquest for her to work at all; and, as respected one night at any rate, she placed the cow in a situation of luxurious warmth and comfort. Then retreating into the warm house, and 'barring' the door, she sat down to undress the two youngest of the children; them she laid carefully and cosily in their little nests up stairs, and sang them to sleep. The rest she kept up to bear her company until the clock should tell them it was midnight; up to which time she had still a lingering hope that some welcome shout from the hills above, which they were all to strain

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their ears to catch, might yet assure them that they were not wholly orphans, even though one parent should have perished. No shout, it may be supposed, was ever heard; nor could a shout, in any case, have been heard, for the night was one of tumultuous wind. And though, amidst its ravings, sometimes they fancied a sound of voices, still, in the dead lulls that now and then succeeded, they heard nothing to confirm their hopes. As last services to what she might now have called her own little family, Agnes took precautions against the drifting of the snow within the door and the imperfect window, which had caused them some discomfort on the preceding day; and, finally, she adopted the most systematic and elaborate plans for preventing the possibility of their fire being extinguished, which, in the event of their being thrown upon the ultimate resource of their potatoes, would be absolutely (and in any event nearly) indispensable to their existence.

The night slipped away, and another morning came, bringing with it no better hopes of any kind. Change there had been none, but for the worse. The snow had greatly increased in quantity; and the drifts seemed far more formidable. A second day passed like the first; little Agnes still keeping her little flock quiet, and tolerably comfortable; and still calling on all the elders in succession to say their prayers, morning and night.

A third day came; and whether it was on that or on the fourth, I do not now recollect; but on one or other there came a welcome gleam of hope. The arrangement of the snow drifts had shifted during the night; and though the wooden bridge was still impracticable, a low wall had been exposed, over which, by a very considerable circuit, and crossing the low shoulder of a hill, it seemed possible that a road might be found into Grasmere. In

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some walls it was necessary to force gaps; but this was effected without much difficulty, even by children; for the Westmoreland walls are always 'open,' that is, uncemented with mortar; and the push of a stick will readily detach so much from the upper part of an old crazy field wall, as to lower it sufficiently for female or for childish steps to pass. The little boys accompanied their sister until she came to the other side of the hill, which, lying more sheltered from the weather, and to windward, offered a path onwards comparatively easy. Here they parted; and little Agnes pursued her solitary mission to the nearest house she could find accessible in Grasmere.

No house could have proved a wrong one in such a case. Miss Wordsworth and I often heard the description renewed, of the horror which, in an instant, displaced the smile of hospitable greeting, when little weeping Agnes told her sad tale. No tongue can express the fervid sympathy which travelled through the vale, like the fire in an American forest, when it was learned that neither George nor Sarah Green had been seen by their children since the day of the Langdale sale. Within half an hour, or little more, from the remotest parts of the valley — some of them distant nearly two miles from the point of rendezvous — all the men of Grasmere had assembled at the little cluster of cottages called 'Kirktown,' from their adjacency to the venerable parish church of St. Oswald. There were at the time I settled in Grasmere, (viz. in the Spring of 1809, and, therefore, I suppose at this time, fifteen months previously, about sixty-three households in the vale; and the total number of souls was about two hundred and sixty-five; so that the number of fighting men would be about sixty or sixty-six, according to the common way of computing the proportion; and the majority were so athletic and powerfully built, that, at the village

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games of wrestling and leaping, Professor Wilson, and some visiters of his and mine, scarcely one of whom was under five feet eleven in height, with proportionable breadth, seem but middle sized men amongst the towering forms of the Dalesmen. Sixty at least, after a short consultation as to the plan of operations, and for arranging the kind of signals by which they were to communicate from great distances, and in the perilous events of mists, or snow storms, set off, with the speed of Alpine hunters, to the hills. The dangers of the undertaking were considerable, under the uneasy and agitated state of the weather; and all the women of the vale were in the greatest anxiety, until night brought them back, in a body, unsuccessful. Three days at the least, and I rather think five, the search was ineffectual: which arose partly from the great extent of the ground to be examined, and partly from the natural mistake made of ranging almost exclusively on the earlier days on that part of the hills over which the path of Easedale might be presumed to have been selected under any reasonable latitute of circuitousness. But the fact is, when the fatal accident (for such it has often proved) of a permanent mist surprises a man on the hills, if he turns and loses his direction, he is a lost man; and without doing this so as to lose the power of *s'orienter* in one instant, it is well known how difficult it is to avoid losing it insensibly and by degrees. Baffling snow showers are the worst kind of mists. And the poor Greens had, under that kind of confusion, wandered many a mile out of their proper track.

The zeal of the people, meantime, was not in the least abated, but rather quickened, by the wearisome disappointments; every hour of day-light was turned to account; no man of the valley ever came home to dinner; and the reply of a young shoemaker, on the fourth night's

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return, speaks sufficiently for the unabated spirit of the vale. Miss Wordsworth asked what he would do on the next morning. 'Go up again, of course,' was his answer. But what if to morrow also should turn out like all the rest? 'Why go up in stronger force on the next day.' Yet this man was sacrificing his own daily earnings without a chance of recompense. At length, sagacious dogs were taken up; and, about noonday, a shout from an aeriel height, amongst thick volumes of cloudy vapor, propagated through repeating bands of men from a distance of many miles, conveyed as by telegraph the news that the bodies were found. George Green was found lying at the bottom of a precipice, from which he had fallen. Sarah Green was found on the summit of the precipice; and, by laying together all the indications of what had passed, the sad hieroglyphics of their last agonies, it was conjectured that the husband had desired his wife to pause for a few minutes, wrapping her, meantime, in his own greatcoat, whilst he should go forward and reconnoitre the ground, in order to catch a sight of some object (rocky peak, or tarn, or peat-field) which might ascertain their real situation. Either the snow above, already lying in drifts, or the blinding snow storms driving into his eyes, must have misled him as to the nature of the circumjacent ground; for the precipice over which he had fallen was but a few yards from the spot in which he had quitted his wife. The depth of the descent, and the fury of the wind, (almost always violent on these cloudy altitudes,) would prevent any distinct communication between the dying husband below and his despairing wife above; but it was believed by the shepherds, best acquainted with the ground and the range of sound as regarded the capacities of the human ear under the probable circumstances of the storm, that Sarah might have

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caught, at intervals, the groans of her unhappy partner, supposing that his death were at all a lingering one. Others, on the contrary, supposed her to have gathered this catastrophe rather from the want of any sounds, and from his continued absence, than from any one distinct or positive expression of it; both because the smooth and unruffled surface of the snow where he lay seemed to argue that he had died without a struggle, perhaps without a groan, and because that tremendous sound of 'hurtling' in the upper chambers of the air, which often accompanies a snow storm, when combined with heavy gales of wind, would utterly oppress and stifle (as they conceived) any sounds so feeble as those from a dying man. In any case, and by whatever sad language of sounds or signs, positive or negative, she might have learned or guessed her loss, it was generally agreed that the wild shrieks heard towards midnight in Langdale * Head announced the agonizing moment which brought to her now widowed heart the conviction of utter desolation and of final abandonment to her own fast-fleeting energies. It seemed probable that the sudden disappearance of her husband from her pursuing eyes would teach her to understand his fate; and that the consequent indefinite apprehension of

* I once heard, also, in talking with a Langdale family upon this tragic tale, that the sounds had penetrated into the valley of Little Langdale; which is possible enough. For although this interesting recess of the entire Langdale basin (which bears somewhat of the same relation to Great Langdale that Easdale bears to Grasmere) does, in fact, lie beyond Langdale Head by the entire breadth of that dale, yet, from the singular accident of having its area raised far above the level of the adjacent vales, one most solitary section of Little Langdale (in which lies a tiny lake, and on the banks of that lake dwells one solitary family) being exactly at right angles both to Langdale Head and to the other complimentary section of the Lesser Langdale, is brought into a position and an elevation virtually much nearer to objects (especially to audible objects) on the Langdale Fells.

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instant death lying all around the point on which she sat, had kept her stationary to the very attitude in which her husband left her, until her failing powers and the increasing bitterness of the cold, to one no longer in motion, would soon make those changes of place impossible, which, at any rate, had appeared too dangerous. The footsteps in some places, wherever drifting had not obliterated them, yet traceable as to the outline, though partially filled up with later falls of snow, satisfactorily showed that however much they might have rambled, after crossing and doubling upon their own paths, and many a mile astray from their right track, still they must have kept together to the very plateau or shelf of rock at which their wanderings had terminated; for there were evidently no steps from this plateau in the retrogade order.

By the time they had reached this final stage of their erroneous course, all possibility of escape must have been long over for both alike; because their exhaustion must have been excessive before they could have reached a point so remote and high; and, unfortunately, the direct result of all this exhaustion had been to throw them farther off their home, or from '*any* dwelling-place of man,' than they were at starting. Here, therefore, at this rocky pinnacle, hope was extinct for either party. But it was the impression of the vale, that, perhaps, within half an hour before reaching this fatal point, George Green might, had his conscience or his heart allowed him in so base a desertion, have saved himself singly, without any very great difficulty. It is to be hoped, however — and, for my part, I think too well of human nature to hesitate in believing — that not many even amongst the meaner-minded and the least generous of men could have reconciled themselves to the abandonment of a poor fainting female companion in such circumstances. Still, though not more

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than a most imperative duty, it was one (I repeat) which most of his associates believed to have cost him (perhaps consciously) his life. For his wife not only must have disabled him greatly by clinging to his arm for support; but it was known, from her peculiar character and manner, that she would be likely to rob him of his coolness and presence of mind by too painfully fixing his thoughts, where her own would be busiest, upon their helpless little family. '*Stung* with the thoughts of home' — to borrow the fine expression of Thomson in describing a similar case — alternately thinking of the blessedness of that warm fire-side at Blentarn Ghyll, which was not again to spread its genial glow through her freezing limbs, and of those darling little faces which, in this world, she was to see no more; unintentionally, and without being aware even of that result, she would rob the brave man (for such he was) of his fortitude, and the strong man of his *animal* resources. And yet — (such, in the very opposite direction, was equally the impression universally through Grasmere) — had Sarah Green foreseen, could her affectionate heart have guessed even the tenth part of that love and neighborly respect for herself, which soon afterwards expressed themselves in showers of bounty to her children; could she have looked behind the curtain of destiny sufficiently to learn that the very desolation of these poor children which wrung her maternal heart, and doubtless constituted to her the sting of death, would prove the signal and the pledge of such anxious guardianship as not many rich men's children receive, and that this overflowing offering to her own memory would not be a hasty or decaying tribute of the first sorrowing sensibilities, but would pursue her children steadily until their hopeful settlement in life — or anything approaching this, to have known or have guessed, would have caused her (as all

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said who knew her) to welcome the bitter end by which such privileges were to be purchased.

The funeral of the ill-fated Greens was, it may be supposed, attended by all the vale: it took place about eight days after they were found; and the day happened to be in the most perfect contrast to the sort of weather which prevailed at the time of their misfortune; some snow still remained here and there upon the ground; but the azure of the sky was unstained by a cloud; and a golden sunlight seemed to sleep, so balmly and tranquil was the season, upon the very hills where they had wandered — then a howling wilderness, but now a green pastoral lawn, in its lower ranges, and a glittering expanse, smooth, apparently, and not difficult to the footing, of virgin snow, in its higher. George Green had, I believe, an elder family by a former wife; and it was for some of these children, who lived at a distance, and who wished to give their attendance at the grave, that the funeral was delayed. After this solemn ceremony was over — at which, by the way, I then heard Miss Wordsworth say that the grief of Sarah's illegitimate daughter was the most overwhelming she had ever witnessed — a regular distribution of the children was made amongst the wealthier families of the vale. There had already, and before the funeral, been a perfect struggle to obtain one of the children, amongst all who had any facilities for discharging the duties of such a trust; and even the poorest had put in their claim to bear some part in the expenses of the case. But it was judiciously decided, that none of the children should be entrusted to any persons who seemed likely, either from old age, or from slender means, or from nearer and more persoual responsibilities, to be under the necessity of devolving the trust, sooner or later, upon strangers, who might have none of that interest in the children which attached, in their minds,

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the Grasmere people to the circumstanees that made them orphans. Two twins, who had naturally played together and slept together from their birth, passed into the same family: the others were dispersed; but into such kind-hearted and intelligent families, with continued opportunities of meeting each other on errands, or at church, or at sales, that it was hard to say which had the happier fate. And thus in so brief a period as one fortnight, a household that, by health and strength, by the humility of poverty, and by innocence of life, seemed sheltered from all attacks but those of time, came to be utterly broken up. George and Sarah Green slept in Grasmere churchyard, never more to know the want of 'sun or guiding star.' Their children were scattered over wealthier houses than those of their poor parents, through the vales of Grasmere or Rydal; and Blentarn Ghyll, after being shut up for a season, and ceasing for months to send up its little slender column of smoke at morning and evening, finally passed into the hands of a stranger.

The Wordsworth's, meantime, were so much interested in the future fortunes and the suitable education of the children — feeling, no doubt, that, when both parents, in any little sequestered community, such as that of Grasmere, are suddenly cut off by a tragical death, the children, in such a case, become, in all reason and natural humanity, a bequest to the other members of that community — that they energetically applied themselves to the task of raising funds by subscription; most of which, it is true, might not be wanted until future years should carry one after another of the children successively into different trades or occupation; but they well understood, that more, by tenfold, would be raised under an immediate appeal to the sympathies of men, whilst yet burning fervently towards the sufferers in this calamity, than if

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the application were delayed until the money should be needed. I have mentioned that the Royal Family were made acquainted with the details of the case; that they were powerfully affected by the story, especially by the account of little Agnes, and her premature assumption of the maternal character; and that they contributed most munificently. For my part I could have obtained a good deal from the careless liberality of Oxonian friends towards such a fund. But finding, or rather knowing previously how little, in such an application, it would aid me to plead the name of Wordsworth as the mover of the subscription, (a name that *now* would stand good for some thousands of pounds in that same Oxford — so passes the injustice as well as the glory of this world!) — knowing this, I did not choose to trouble anybody; and the more so as Miss Wordsworth, upon my proposal to write to various ladies, upon whom I knew that I could rely for their several contributions, wrote back to me, desiring that I would not; and upon this satisfactory reason — that the fund had already swelled under the Royal patronage, and the interest excited by so much of the circumstances as could be reported in hurried letters, to an amount beyond what was likely to be wanted for persons whom there was no good reason for pushing out of the sphere to which their birth had called them. The parish even was liable to give aid; and, in the midst of Royal bounty, this was not declined. Finally, to complete their own large share in the charity, the Wordsworths took into their own family one of the children, a girl; Sarah by name; the least amiable, I believe, of the whole; so, at least, I imagined; for this girl it was, and her criminal negligence, that in years to come inflicted the first heavy wound that I sustained in my affections, and first caused me to drink deeply from the cup of grief.

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In taking leave of this subject, I may mention, by the way, that accidents of this nature are not by any means so uncommon, in the mountainous districts of Cumberland and Westmoreland, as the reader might infer from the intensity of the excitement which waited on the catastrophe of the Greens. In that instance, it was not the simple death by cold upon the hills, but the surrounding circumstances, which invested the case with its agitating power: the fellowship in death of a wife and husband; the general impression that the husband had perished in his generous devotion to his wife, (a duty certainly, and no more than a duty, but still, under the instincts of self-preservation, a generous duty;) sympathy with their long agony, as expressed by their long ramblings, and the earnestness of their efforts to recover their home; awe for the long concealment which rested upon their fate; and pity for the helpless condition of the children, so young, and so instantaneously made desolate, and so nearly perishing through the loneliness of their situation, co-operating with stress of weather, had they not been saved by the prudence and timely exertions of a little girl, not much above eight years old; — these were the circumstances and accessary adjuncts of the story which pointed and sharpened the public feelings on that occasion. Else the mere general case of perishing upon the mountains is not, unfortunately, so rare, in *any* season of the year, as, for itself alone, to command a powerful tribute of sorrow from the public mind. Natives as well as strangers, shepherds as well as tourists, have fallen victims, even in summer, to the misleading and confounding effects of deep mists. Sometimes they have continued for days to wander unconsciously in a small circle of two or three miles, never coming within hail of a human dwelling, until exhaustion has forced them into a sleep which has proved their last. Sometimes a

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sprain or injury, that disabled a foot or a leg, has destined them to die by the shocking death of hunger.* Sometimes

* The case of Mr. Gough, who perished in the bosom of Helvellyn, and was supposed by some to have been disabled by a sprain of the ankle, whilst others believed him to have received that injury and his death simultaneously, in a fall from the lower shelf of a precipice, became well known to the public, in all its details, from the accident of having been recorded in verse by two writers nearly at the same time — by Sir Walter Scott, and by Wordsworth. But here, again, as in the case of the Greens, it was not the naked fact of his death amongst the solitudes of the mountains that would have won the public attention, or have obtained the honor of a metrical commemoration — indeed, to say the truth, the general sympathy with this tragic event was not derived chiefly from the unhappy tourist's melancholy end, for that was too shocking to be even hinted at by either of the two writers, (in fact, there was too much reason to fear that it had been the lingering death of famine) — not the personal sufferings of the principal figure in the little drama — but the sublime and mysterious fidelity of the secondary figure, his dog; this it was which won the imperishable remembrance of the vales, and which accounted for the profound interest that immediately gathered round the incidents — an interest that still continues to hallow the memory of the dog. Not the dog of Athens, nor the dog of Pompeii, so well deserve the immortality of history or verse. Mr. Gough was a young man, belonging to the Society of 'Friends,' who took an interest in the mountain scenery of the lake district, both as a lover of the picturesque, and as a man of science. It was in this latter character, I believe, that he had ascended Helvellyn at the time when he met his melancholy end. From his local familiarity with the ground — for he had been an annual visitant to the lakes — he slighted the usual precaution of taking a guide; and, probably, under any clear state of the atmosphere, he might have found the attendance of such a person a superfluous restraint upon the freedom of his motions, and of his solitary thoughts. Mist, unfortunately — impenetrable volumes of mist — came floating over (as so often they do) from the gloomy falls that compose a common centre for Easedale, Langdale, Eskdale, Borrowdale, Wastdale, Gatesgarthdale, (pronounced Keskadale,) and Ennesdale. Ten or fifteen minutes afford ample time for this aërial navigation: within that short interval, sunlight, moonlight, starlight, alike disappear; all paths are lost; vast precipices are concealed, or filled up by treacherous draperies of vapor; the points of the compass are irrecoverably confounded; and one vast cloud, too often the cloud of death even to the experienced shepherd, sits like a vast pavilion upon

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a fall from the summit of awful precipices has dismissed them from the anguish of perplexity in the extreme, from the conflicts of hope and fear, and in the same moment perhaps from life. Sometimes, also, the mountainous

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the summits and the gloomy coves of Helvellyn. Mr. Gough ought to have allowed for this not unfrequent accident, and for its bewildering effects, under which all local knowledge (even that of shepherds) becomes in an instant unavailing. What was the course and succession of his dismal adventures, after he became hidden from the world by the vapory screen, could not be ever deciphered even by the most sagacious of mountaineers, although, in most cases, they manifest an Indian truth of eye, together with an Indian felicity of weaving all the signs that the eye can gather into a significant tale, by connecting links of judgment and natural inference, especially where the whole case ranges within certain known limits of time and of space; but in this case two accidents forbade the appplication of their customary skill to the circumstances. One was, the want of snow at the time, to receive the impression of his feet; the other, the unusual length of time through which his remains lay undiscovered. He had made the ascent at the latter end of October — a season when the final garment of snow, which clothes Helvellyn from the setting in of winter to the sunny days of June, has frequently not made its appearance. He was not discovered until the following spring, when a shepherd, traversing the coves of Helvellyn or of Fairfield in quest of a stray sheep, was struck by the unusual sound (and its echo from the neighboring rocks) of a short, quick bark, or cry of distress, as if from a dog or young fox. Mr. Gough had not been missed: for those who saw or knew of his ascent from the Wyburn side of the mountain, took it for granted that he had fulfilled his intention of descending in the opposite direction into the valley of Patterdale, or into the Duke of Norfolk's deer-park on Ulleswater, or possibly into Matterdale; and that he had finally quitted the country by way of Penrith. Having no reason, therefore, to expect a domestic animal in a region so far from human habitations, the shepherd was the more surprised at the sound, and its continued iteration. He followed its guiding, and came to a deep hollow, near the awful curtain of rock called *Striding-Edge*. There, at the foot of a tremendous precipice, lay the body of the unfortunate tourist; and, watching by his side, a meagre shadow, literally reduced to a skin and to bones that could be counted, (for it is a matter of absolute demonstration that he never could have obtained either food or shelter through his long winter's imprisonment,) sate this most faithful of servants — mounting guard upon his master's honored body, and protecting it (as he *had* done effectually) from all

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solitudes have been made the scenes of remarkable suicides: in particular, there was a case, a little before I came into the country, of a studious and meditative young boy, who found no pleasure but in books, and the search after knowledge. He languished, with a sort of despairing nympholepsy, after intellectual pleasures — for which he felt too well assured that *his* term of allotted time, the short period of years through which his relatives had been willing to support him at St. Bees, was rapidly drawing to an end. In fact, it was just at hand; and he was sternly required to take a long farewell of the poets and geometricians for whose sublime contemplations he hungered and thirsted. One week was to have transferred him to some huxtering concern, which not in any spirit of pride he ever affected to despise, but which in utter alienation of heart he loathed — as one whom nature, and his own diligent cultivation of the opportunities recently open to him for a brief season, had dedicated to another yoke. He mused — revolved his situation in his own mind — computed his power to liberate himself from the bondage of dependency — calculated the chances of his ever obtaining this liberation, from change in the position of his family, or revolution in his fortunes — and, finally, attempted conjecturally to determine the amount of effect which his new and illiberal employments might have upon his own mind in weaning him from his present elevated tasks, and unfitting him for their enjoyment in distant years, when cir-

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violation by the birds of prey which haunt the central solitudes of Helvellyn: —

> 'How nourish'd through that length of time
> *He* knows — who gave that love sublime,
> And sense of loyal duty — great
> Beyond all human estimate.'

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cumstances might again place it in his power to indulge them.

These meditations were, in part, communicated to a friend; and in part, also, the result to which they brought him. That this result was gloomy, his friend knew; but not, as in the end it appeared, that it was despairing. Such, however, it was: and, accordingly, having satisfied himself that the chances of a happier destiny were for him slight or none — and having, by a last fruitless effort, ascertained that there was no hope whatever of mollifying his relatives, or of obtaining a year's delay of his sentence — he walked quietly up to the cloudy wildernesses within Blencathara; read his Æschylus, (perhaps in those appropriate scenes of the Prometheus, that pass amidst the wild valleys of the Caucasus, and below the awful summits, untrod by man, of the ancient Elborus;) read him for the last time; for the last time fathomed the abyss-like subtilties of his favorite geometrician, the mighty Apollonius; for the last time retraced some parts of the narrative, so simple in its natural grandeur, composed by that imperial captain, the most majestic man of ancient history —

'The foremost man of all this world,'

in the confession of his enemies — the first of the Cæsars. These three authors — Æschylus, Apollonius, and Cæsar — he studied until the daylight waned, and the stars began to appear. Then he made a little pile of the three volumes that served him for a pillow; took a dose, such as he had heard would be sufficient, of laudanum; laid his head upon the records of the three mighty spirits of elder times; and, with his face upturned to the heavens and the stars, slipped quietly away into a sleep upon which no morning ever dawned. The laudanum — whether it were from the effect of the open air, or from some peculiarity of

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temperament — had not produced sickness in the first stage of its action, nor convulsions in the last. But from the serenity of his countenance, and from the tranquil maintenance of his original supine position — for his head was still pillowed upon the three intellectual Titans, Greek, and Roman, and his eyes were still directed towards the stars — it would appear that he had died placidly, and without a struggle. In this way, the imprudent boy, who, like Chatterton, would not wait for the change that a day might bring, obtained the liberty he sought; and whatsoever, in his last scene of life, was not explained by the objects and the arrangement of the objects, about him, found a sufficient solution in previous conversations with various acquaintances, and in his confidential explanations of his purposes, which he had communicated, so far as he felt it safe, to his only friend.

Reverting, however, from this little episode to the more ordinary case of shepherds, whose duties, in searching after missing sheep, or after sheep surprised by sudden snow-drifts, are too likely, in all seasons of severity, to bring them within reach of dangers which, in relation to their natural causes, must probably for ever remain the same; and it seems the more surprising, and the more to be deplored, that no effort has been made, or at least none commensurate to the evil — none upon a scale that can be called *national* — to apply the resources of art and human contrivance, in any one of many possible modes, to the relief of a case which, in some years, has gone near to the depopulation of a whole pastoral hamlet, as respects the most vigorous and hopeful part of its male population; and which annually causes, by its mere contemplation, the heartache to many a young wife, and many an anxious mother. In reality, amongst all pastoral districts, where the field of their labor lies in mountainous tracts, an

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allowance is as regularly made for the loss of human life, in severe autumns or springs — by accidents, owing to mists or storms suddenly enveloping the hills, and surprising the shepherds — as for the loss of sheep: some proportion out of each class is considered as a kind of tithe-offering to the stern goddess of calamity, and in the light of a ransom for those who escape. Grahame, the excellent author of the 'Sabbath,' says that (confining himself to Scotland) he has known winters in which a single parish lost as many as ten shepherds. And this mention of Grahame reminds me of a most useful and feasible plan proposed by him for obviating the main pressure of such situations, amidst snow and solitude, and night. I call it feasible with good reason; for Grahame, who doubtless had made the calculations, declares that, for so trifling a sum as a few hundred pounds, every square mile in the southern counties of Scotland, (that is, I presume, throughout the Lowlands,) might be fitted up with his apparatus; and, when that sum is compared with the lavish expenditure upon lifeboats, it will appear trivial indeed. He prefaces his plan by one general remark, to which I believe that every mountaineer will assent, viz. that the vast majority of deaths in such cases is owing to the waste of animal power in trying to recover the right direction; and, probably, it *would* be recovered in a far greater number of instances, were the advance persisted in according to any unity of plan: but partly the distraction of mind, and irresolution, under such circumstances, cause the wanderer frequently to change his direction voluntarily, according to any new fancy that starts up to beguile him; and partly, he changes it often insensibly and unconsciously, from the same cause which originally led him astray. Obviously, therefore, the primary object should be, to compensate the loss of distinct vision — which, for the present, is irrepara-

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ble in that form — by substituting an appeal to another sense. That error which has been caused by the obstruction of the eye, may be corrected by the sounder information of the ear. Let crosses, such as are raised for other purposes in Catholic lands, be planted at intervals, suppose of one mile, in every direction. 'Snow storms,' says Grahame, 'are almost always accompanied with wind. Suppose, then, a pole, fifteen feet high, well fixed in the ground, with two cross spars placed near the bottom, to denote the airts, (or points of the compass;) a bell hung at the top of this pole, with a piece of flat wood (attached to it) projecting upwards, would ring with the slightest breeze. As they would be purposely made to have different tones, the shepherd would soon be able to distinguish one from another. He could never be more than a mile from one or other of them. On coming to the spot, he would at once know the points of the compass, and of course, the direction in which his home lay.' This is part of the note attached to the 'Winter Sabbath Walk,' and particularly referring to the following picturesque passages: —

'Now is the time
To visit Nature in her grand attire;
Though perilous the mountainous ascent,
A noble recompense the danger brings.
How beautiful the plain stretch'd far below!
Unvaried though it be, save by yon stream
With azure windings, or the leafless wood.
But what the beauty of the plain compar'd
To that sublimity which reigns enthron'd,
Holding joint rule with solitude divine,
Among yon rocky fells that bid defiance
To steps the most adventurously bold?
There silence dwells profound; or, if the cry
Of high-pois'd eagle break at times the calm,
The mantled echoes no response return.

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But let me now explore the deep-sunk dell.
No foot-print, save the covey's or the flock's,
Is seen along the rill, where marshy springs
Still rear the grassy blade of vivid green.
Beware, ye shepherds, of these treacherous haunts;
Nor linger there too long: the wintry day
Soon closes; and full oft a heavier fall
Heaped by the blast, fills up the shelter'd glen,
While, gurgling deep below, the buried rill
Mines for itself a snow-coved way. O then
Your helpless charge drive from the tempting spot;
And keep them on the bleak hill's stormy side,
Where night-winds sweep the gathering drift away.'

A more useful suggestion was never made. Many thousands of lives would be saved in each century by the general adoption of Mr. Grahame's plan; and two or three further hints may be added. 1. Before these crosses can be sown as plentifully as he proposes, it will, in a large majority of cases, answer the same end, to make such an approximation to his plan as would not cost, perhaps, more than one quarter of the first expense, viz., by placing the crosses at such distances that the bell might make itself heard: suppose the intervals to be four miles, then the greatest *possible* distance from the sound would be two miles; and so far a bell might send its sound upon the breeze, for there will be always some of these crosses to windward. 2. They might be made of cast-iron — as one means of ensuring their preservation. 3. There might be a box, or little cell attached, capable of receiving one person; this should be suspended at a height, suppose of eight feet, from the ground; and the entrance should be by a little ladder leading into the box through an orifice from below; which orifice should be covered by a little door or lid — one that should open inwards when pressed by the head of the ascending person. Finally, in a country where milestones and guide-posts are often wantonly mutilated or

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destroyed, it may be thought that these crosses would not long be in a condition to do their office ; in particular, that the bells would be detached and carried off. But it should be remembered, that even mile-stones on the most public roads have ceased to be injured since they have been made of iron ; that these crosses never would be in a populous region, but exactly in the most solitary places of the island ; and that in any case where they ceased to be solitary, *there* the crosses would cease to be necessary.

Another protecting circumstance would rise out of the simplicity of manners, which is pretty sure to prevail in a mountainous region, and the pious tenderness universally felt towards those situations of peril, which are incident to all alike — men and women, parents and children, the strong and the weak. The crosses, I would answer for it, whenever they are erected, will be protcctcd by a superstition, such as that which in Holland consecrates the loss of a stork, and in most countries of some animal or other. But it would be right to strengthen this feeling, by instilling it as a principle of duty, in the catechisms of mountainous regions : and, perhaps, also, to invest this duty with a religious sanctity, at the approach of every winter, there might be read from the altar a solemn commination, such as that which the English Church appoints for Ash-Wednesday — 'Cursed is he that removeth his neighbor's landmark,' &c., &c., to which might now be added — 'Cursed is he that causeth the steps of the wayfarer to go astray, and layeth snares for the belated traveller in the wilderness ; cursed is he that removeth the bell from the snow-cross.' And every child might learn to fear a judgment of retribution upon its own steps in case of any such wicked action, by reading the tale of him, who, in order

'To plague the Abbot of Aberbrothock,'

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removed the bell from the Inchcape rock; which same rock, in after days, and for want of this very warning bell, inflicted miserable ruin upon himself, his ship, and his unoffending crew. Warning sentences should also be inscribed upon all the four faces of the little cell, that nobody might offend in a spirit of jest or forgetfulness; and as the century advanced, a memorial list, (like the Roman *votive tablets*, suspended on the walls of temples,) should be firmly attached to the cross, of all who had benefited by its shelter. The mere fact of having ascended the ladder being taken as sufficient evidence that a sanctuary had been found necessary. The sanctity of the place might, in one generation, be so far improved as to protect a small supply of brandy and biscuit, to be lodged there on the coming on of winter. If a few rockets, and some apparatus for lighting a match were also left accessible in some of the remoter solitudes, the storm-bound and exhausted wanderer, would, besides recruiting his strength, find it possible to telegraph his situation to some one of the neighboring valleys. Once made sacred from violation, these crosses might afterwards be made subjects of suitable ornament; that is to say, they might be made as picturesque in form, and color, and material, as the crosses of Alpine countries, or the guide-posts of England often are. The associated circumstances of storm and solitude, of winter, of night, and wayfaring, would give dignity to almost any form which had become familiar to the eye as the one appropriated to this purpose; and the particular form of a cross or crucifix, besides its own beauty, would suggest to the mind a pensive allegoric memorial of that spiritual asylum, offered by the same emblem to the poor erring roamer in our human pilgrimage, whose steps are beset with other snares, and whose heart is made anxious by

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another darkness, and another storm — the darkness of guilt, or the storm of affliction. If iron was found too costly, it might be used only for the little cell; and the rest of the structure might be composed with no expense at all, except the labor, (and that would generally be given by public contribution of the neighborhood,) from the rude undressed stones which are always found lying about in such situations, and which are so sufficient for all purposes of strength, that the field-walls, and by far the greater number of the dwelling-houses in Westmoreland, are built of such materials, and, until late years, without mortar.* But, whatever were the materials, the name of these rural guides and asylums — 'storm-crosses' — would continually remind both the natives and strangers of their purpose and functions — functions that, in the process of time, would make them as interesting to the imagination and to the memory, as they would, in fact, be useful and hope-sustaining to the shepherd surprised by snow, and the traveller surprised by night.

* This recent change in the art of rustic masonry by the adoption of mortar, does not mark any advance in that art, but, on the contrary, a decay of skill and care. Twenty years ago, when 'dry' walls were in general use except for a superior class of houses, it was necesssary to supply the want of mortar by a much nicer adaptation of the stones to each other. But now this care is regarded as quite superfluous; for the largest gaps and cavities amongst the stones are filled up with mortar; meantime, the walls built in this way are not so impervious either to rain or wind as those upon the old patent construction of the past generation.

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE SARACEN'S HEAD.

My first visit to the Wordsworths had been made in November, 1807; but, on that occasion, from the necessity of saving the Michaelmas term at Oxford, for which I had barely left myself time, I stayed only one week. On the last day, I witnessed a scene, the first and the last of its kind that ever I *did* witness, almost too trivial to mention, except for the sake of showing what things occur in the realities of experience, which a novelist could not venture to imagine. Wordsworth and his sister were under an engagement of some standing to dine on that day with a literary lady about four miles distant; and, as the southern mail, which I was to catch at a distance of eighteen miles, would not pass that point until long after midnight, Miss Wordsworth proposed that, rather than pass my time at an inn, I should join the dinner party; a proposal rather more suitable to her own fervent and hospitable temper, than to the habits of our hostess, who must (from what I came to know of her in after years) have looked upon me as an intruder. Something *had* reached Miss Wordsworth of her penurious *ménage*, but nothing that approached the truth. I was presented to the lady, whom we found a perfect *bas bleu* of a very commonplace order, but having some other accomplishments beyond her slender acquaintance with literature. Our party consisted

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of six — our hostess, who might be fifty years of age; a pretty timid young woman, who was there in the character of a humble friend; some stranger, or other; the Wordsworths, and myself. The dinner was the very humblest and simplest I had ever seen — in that there was nothing to offend — I did not then know that the lady was very rich — but also it was flagrantly insufficient in quantity. Dinner, however, proceeded; when, without any removals, in came a kind of second course, in the shape of a solitary pheasant. This, in a cold manner, she asked me to try; but we, in our humility, declined for the present; and also in mere good nature, not wishing to expose too palpably the insufficiency of her dinner. May I die the death of a traitor, if she did not proceed, without further question to any one of us, (and as to the poor young companion, no form of even invitation was conceded to her,) and, in the eyes of us all, ate up the whole bird, from alpha to omega. Upon my honor, I thought to myself, this is a scene I would not have missed. It is well to know the possibilities of human nature. Could she have a bet depending on the issue, and would she explain all to us as soon as she had won her wager? Alas! no explanation ever came, except, indeed, that afterwards her character, put *en evidence* upon a score of occasions, too satisfactorily explained everything. No; it was, as Mr. Coleridge expresses it, a psychological curiosity — a hollow thing — and only once matched in all the course of my reading, in or out of romances; but that once, I grieve to say it, was by a king, and a sort of hero.

The Duchess of Marlborough it is, who reports the shocking anecdote of William III., that actually Princess Anne, his future wife, durst not take any of the green peas brought to the dinner table, when that vegetable happened to be as yet scarce and premature. *There* was

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a gentleman! And such a lady had we for our hostess. However, we all observed a suitable gravity; but afterwards, when we left the house, the remembrance affected us differently: Miss Wordsworth laughed with undissembled glee; but Wordsworth thought it too grave a matter for laughing — he was thoroughly disgusted; and said repeatedly, a person cannot be honest, positively not honest, who is capable of such an act. The lady is dead, and I shall not mention her name: she lived only to gratify her selfish propensities; and two little anecdotes may show the outrageous character of her meanness. I was now on the debtor side of her dinner account, and, therefore, in a future year she readily accepted an invitation to come and dine with me at my cottage. But, on a subsequent occasion, when I was to have a few literary people at dinner, whom I knew that she greatly wished to meet, she positively replied thus: — 'No; I have already come with my young lady to dine with you; that puts me on the wrong side by one; now if I were to come again, as I cannot leave Miss —— behind, I shall then be on the wrong side by three; and that is more than I could find opportunities to repay before I go up to London for the winter.' 'Very well,' I said, 'give me 3*s*. and *that* will settle the account.' She laughed, but positively persisted in not coming until after dinner, notwithstanding she had to drive a distance of ten miles.

The other anecdote is worse. She was exceedingly careful of her health; and not thinking it healthy to drive about in a close carriage, which, besides, could not have suited the narrow mountain tracks, to which her sketching habits attracted her, she shut up her town carriage for the summer, and jobbed some little open car. Being a very large woman, and, moreover, a masculine woman, with a bronzed complexion, and always choosing to wear, at

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night, a turban, round hair that was as black as that of the 'Moors of Malabar,' she presented an exact likeness of a Saracen's Head, as painted over inn doors; whilst the timid and delicate young lady, by her side, looked like 'dejected Pity' at the side of 'Revenge,' when assuming the war-denouncing trumpet. Some Oxonians and Cantabs, who, at different times, were in the habit of meeting this oddly assorted party in all nooks of the country, used to move the question, whether the poor horse or the young lady had the worst of it? At length the matter was decided: the horse was fast going off this sublunary stage; and the Saracen's Head was told as much, and with this little addition — that his death was owing *inter alia* to starvation. Her answer was remarkable: — 'But, my dear madam, that is his master's fault; I pay so much a-day — he is to keep the horse.' That might be, but still the horse was dying — and dying in the way stated. The Saracen's Head persisted in using him under those circumstances — such was her 'bond' — and, in a short time, the horse actually died. Yes, the horse died — and died of starvation — or at least of an illness caused originally by starvation; for so said, not merely the whole population of the little neighboring town, but also the surgeon. Not long after, however, the lady, the Saracen's Head, died herself; but, I fear, *not* of starvation; for, though something like it did prevail at her table, she prudently reserved it all for her guests; in fact, I never heard of such vigilant care, and so much laudable exertion, applied to the promotion of health: yet all failed, and in a degree which confounded people's speculations upon the subject — for she did not live much beyond sixty; whereas everybody supposed that the management of her physical system entitled her

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to outwear a century. Perhaps the prayers of horses might avail to order it otherwise.

But the singular thing about this lady's mixed and contradictory character, was, that in London and Bath, where her peculiar habits of life were naturally less accurately known, she maintained the reputation of one who united the accomplishments of literature and art with a remarkable depth of sensibility, and a most amiable readiness to enter into the distresses of her friends, by sympathy the most cordial, and consolation the most delicate. More than once I have seen her name recorded in printed books, and attended with praises that tended to this effect. I have seen letters also, from a lady in deep affliction, which spoke of the Saracen's Head as having paid her the first visit from which she drew any effectual consolation. Such are the erroneous impressions conveyed by biographical memoirs; or, which is a more charitable construction of the case, such are the inconsistencies of the human heart! And certainly there was one fact, even in her Westmoreland life, that *did* lend some countenance to the southern picture of her amiableness — and this lay in the cheerfulness with which she gave up her time (*time*, but not much of her redundant money) to the promotion of the charitable schemes set on foot by the neighboring ladies; sometimes for the education of poor children, sometimes for the visiting of the sick, &c., &c. I have heard several of those ladies express their gratitude for her exertions, and declare that she was about their best member. But their horror was undisguised when the weekly committee came, by rotation, to hold its sittings at her little villa; for, as the business occupied them frequently from eleven o'clock in the forenoon to a late dinner hour, and as many of them had a fifteen or twenty miles' drive, they needed some refreshments: but these were, of course, a 'great idea'

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at the Saracen's Head; since, according to the epigram which illustrates the maxim of Tacitus, that *omne ignotum pro magnifico*, and, applying it to the case of a miser's horse, terminates by saying, 'What vast ideas must he have of oats!'—upon the same principle, these poor ladies, on these fatal committee days, never failed to form most exaggerated ideas of bread, butter, and wine. And at length, some, more intrepid than the rest, began to carry biscuits in their muffs, and, with the conscious tremors of school girls, (profiting by the absence of the mistress, but momentarily expecting detection,) they employed some casual absence of their unhostly hostess in distributing and eating their hidden 'viaticum.' However, it must be acknowledged, that time and exertion, and the sacrifice of more selfish pleasures during the penance at the school, were, after all, real indications of kindness to her fellow-creatures; and, as I wish to part in peace, even with the Saracen's Head, I have reserved this anecdote to the last; for it is painful to have lived on terms of good nature, and exchanging civilities, with any human being, of whom one can report absolutely *no* good thing: and I sympathize heartily with that indulgent person of whom it is somewhere recorded, that upon an occasion when the death of a man happened to be mentioned, who was unanimously pronounced a wretch without one good quality, '*monstrum nullâ virtute redemptum*,' he ventured, however, at last, in a deprecatory tone to say—'Well, he did *whistle* beautifully, at any rate.'

Talking of 'whistling,' reminds me to return from my digression; for on that night, the 12th of November, 1807, and the last of my visits to the Wordsworths, I took leave of them in the inn at Ambleside, about ten at night; and the post-chaise in which I crossed the country to catch the mail, was driven by a postilion who whistled so

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delightfully, that, for the first time in my life, I became aware of the prodigious powers which are lodged potentially in so despised a function of the vocal organs. For the whole of the long assent up Orrest Head, which obliged him to walk his horses for a full half-mile, he made the woods of Windermere ring with the canorous sweetness of his half flute half clarionet music; but, in fact, the subtle melody of the effect placed it in power far beyond either flute or clarionet. A year or two afterwards, I heard a fellow-servant of this same postilion's, a black, play with equal superiority of effect upon the jew's harp; making that, which in most hands is a mere monotonous jarring, a dull reverberating vibration, into a delightful lyre of no inconsiderable compass. We have since heard of, some of us have heard, the chinchopper. Within the last hundred years, we have had the Æolian harp, (first mentioned and described in the 'Castle of Indolence,' which I think was first published entire about 1738;) then the musical glasses; then the *celestina*, to represent the music of the spheres, introduced by Mr. Walker, or some other lecturing astronomer; and many another fine effect obtained from trivial means. But, at this moment, I recollect a performance perhaps more astonishing than any of them: a Mr. Worgman, who had very good introductions, and very general ones, (for he was to be met within a few months in every part of the island,) used to accompany himself on the piano, weaving *extempore* long tissues of impassioned music, that were called his own, but which, in fact, were all the better for not being such, or at least for continually embodying passages from Handel and Pergolesi. To this substratum of the instrumental music, he contrived to adapt some unaccountable and indescribable choral accompaniment, a pomp of sound, a tempestuous blair of harmony ascending

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in clouds, not from any one, but apparently from a band of Mr. Worgman's; for sometimes it was a trumpet, sometimes a kettle-drum, sometimes a cymbal, sometimes a bassoon, and sometimes it was all of these at once.

'And now 'twas like all instruments;
And now it was a flute;
And now it was an angel's voice,
That maketh the heavens be mute.'

In this case, I presume, that ventriloquism must have had something to do with the effect; but whatever it were, the power varied greatly with the state of his spirits, or with some other fluctuating causes in the animal economy. However, the result of all these experiences is, that I shall never more be surprised at any musical effects, the very greatest, drawn from whatever inconsiderable or apparently inadequate means; not even if the butcher's instrument, the marrow-bones and cleaver, or any of those culinary instruments so pleasantly treated by Addison in the 'Spectator,' such as the kitchen dresser and thumb, the tongs and shovel, the pepper and salt box, should be exalted, by some immortal butcher or inspired scullion, into a sublime harp, dulcimer, or lute, capable of wooing St. Cecilia to listen, able even

'To raise a mortal to the skies,
Or draw an angel down.'

That night, as I was passing under the grounds of Elleray, then belonging to a Westmoreland 'statesman,' a thought struck me, that I was now traversing a road with which, as yet, I was scarcely at all acquainted, but which, in years to come, might perhaps be as familiar to my eye as the rooms of my own house; and possibly that I might traverse them in company with faces as yet not even seen by me, but in those future years dearer than

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any which I had yet known. In this prophetic glimpse there was nothing very marvellous; for what could be more natural than that I should come to reside in the neighborhood of the Wordsworths, and that this might lead to my forming connections in a country which I should consequently come to know so well? I did not, however, anticipate so definitely and circumstantially as all this; but generally I had a dim presentiment that here, on this very road, I should often pass, and in company that now, not even conjecturally delineated or drawn out of the utter darkness in which they were as yet reposing, would hereafter plant memories in my heart, the last that will fade from it in the hour of death. Here, afterwards, at this very spot, or a little above it, but on this very estate, which, from local peculiarities of ground, and of sudden angles, was peculiarly *kenspeck*, *i. e.* easy of recognition, and could have been challenged and identified at any distance of years; here afterwards lived Professor Wilson, the only very intimate male friend I have had; here too, it was, my M., that, in long years afterwards, through many a score of nights — nights often dark as Erebus, and amidst thunders and lightnings the most sublime — we descended at twelve, one, and two o'clock at night, speeding from Kendal to our distant home, twenty miles away. Thou wert at present a child not nine years old, nor had I seen thy face, nor heard thy name. But within nine years from that same night, thou wert seated by my side; — and, thenceforwards, through a period of fourteen years, how often did we two descend, hand locked in hand, and thinking of things to come, at a pace of hurricane; whilst all the sleeping woods about us re-echoed the uproar of trampling hoofs and groaning wheels. Duly as we mounted the crest of Orrest Head, mechanically and of themselves almost, and spontaneously,

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without need of voice or spur, according to Westmoreland usage, the horses flew off into a gallop, like the pace of a swallow.* It was a railroad pace that we ever maintained; objects were descried far ahead in one moment, and in the next were crowding into the rear. Three miles and a half did this storm flight continue, for so long the descent lasted. Then, for many a mile, over undulating ground, did we ultimately creep and fly, until again a long precipitous movement, again a storm gallop, that hardly suffered the feet to touch the ground, gave warning that we drew near to that beloved cottage; warning to us — warning to them —

——— 'the silence that is here
Is of the grave, and of austere
But happy feelings of the dead.'

Sometimes the nights were bright with cloudless moonlight, and of that awful breathless quiet which often broods over vales that are peculiarly landlocked, and which is, or seems to be, so much more expressive of a solemn hush and a Sabbath-like rest from the labors of nature, than I remember to have experienced in flat countries: —

'It is not quiet — is not peace —
But something deeper far than these.'

And on such nights it was no sentimental refinement, but a sincere and hearty feeling, that, in wheeling past the

* It may be supposed, not literally, for the swallow, (or at least that species called the Swift,) has been known to fly at the rate of 300 miles an hour. Very probably, however, this pace was not deduced from an entire hour's performance, but estimated by proportion from a flight of one or two minutes. An interesting anecdote is told by the gentleman (I believe the Rev. E. Stanley) who described in *Blackwood's Magazine* the opening of the earliest English railway — viz.: that a bird (snipe was it, or field-fare, or plover?) ran, or rather flew, a race with the engine for three or four miles, until finding itself likely to be beaten, it then suddenly wheeled away into the moors.

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village churchyard of Stavely, something like an outrage seemed offered to the sanctity of its graves, by the uproar of our career. Sometimes the nights were of that pitchy darkness which is more palpable and unfathomable wherever hills intercept the gleaming of light which otherwise is usually seen to linger about the horizon in the northern quarter; and then arose in perfection that striking effect, when the glare of lamps searches for one moment every dark recess of the thickets, forces them into sudden, almost day-light revelation, only to leave them within the twinkling of the eye in darkness more profound; making them, like the snow-flakes falling upon a cataract, 'one moment bright, then gone for ever.' But, dark or moonlight alike, in every instance throughout so long a course of years, the road was entirely our own for the whole twenty miles. After nine o'clock, not many people are abroad; after ten, absolutely none, upon the roads of Westmoreland; a circumstance which gives a peculiar solemnity to a traveller's route amongst these quiet valleys upon a summer evening of latter May, of June, or early July; since, in a latitude so much higher than that of London, broad day light prevails to an hour long after nine. Nowhere is the holiness of vesper hours more deeply felt. And now, in 1839, from all these flying journeys and their stinging remembrances, hardly a wreck survives of what composed their living equipage: the men who chiefly drove in those days (for I have ascertained it) are gone; the horses are gone; darkness rests upon all, except myself. I, wo is me! am the solitary survivor from scenes that now seem to me as fugitive as the flying lights from our lamps as they shot into the forest recesses. God forbid that on such a theme I should seem to affect sentimentalism. It is from overmastering recollections that I look back on those distant days; and chiefly

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I have suffered myself to give way before the impulse that haunts me, of reverting to those bitter, bitter thoughts, in order to notice one singular waywardness or caprice (as it might seem) incident to the situation, which, I doubt not, besieges many more people than myself: it is, that I find a more poignant suffering, a pang more searching, in going back, not to those enjoyments themselves, and the days when they were within my power, but to times anterior, when as yet they did not exist; nay, when some who were chiefly concerned in them as parties, had not even been born. No night, I might almost say, of my whole life, remains so profoundly, painfully, and pathetically imprinted upon my remembrance, as this very one, on which I tried, prelusively, as it were, that same road in solitude, and lulled by the sweet carolings of the postilion, which, *after* an interval of ten years, and *through* a period of more than equal duration, it was destined that I should so often traverse in circumstances of happiness too radiant, that for me are burned out for ever. Coleridge told me of a similar case that had fallen within his knowledge, and the impassioned expression which the feelings belonging to it drew from a servant woman at Keswick: — She had nursed some boy, either of his or of Mr. Southey's; the boy had lived apart from the rest of the family, secluded with his nurse in her cottage; she was doatingly fond of him; lived, in short, *by* him as well as for him; and nearly ten years of her life had been exalted into one golden dream by his companionship. At length came the day which severed the connection; and she, in the anguish of the separation, bewailing her future loneliness, and knowing too well that education and the world, if it left him some kind remembrances of her, never could restore him to her arms the same fond loving boy that felt no shame in surrendering his whole heart to

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caressing and being caressed, did not revert to any day or season of her ten years' happiness, but went back to the very day of his arrival, a particular Thursday, and to an hour when, as yet, she had not seen him, exclaiming—'O that Thursday! O that it could come back! that Thursday when the chaise-wheels were ringing in the streets of Keswick; when yet I had not seen his bonny face; but when *he* was coming!'

Ay, reader, all this may sound foolishness to you, that perhaps never had a heartache, or that may have all your blessings to come. But now let me return to my narrative. After about twelve months' interval, and therefore again in November, but November of the year 1808, I repeated my visit to Wordsworth, and upon a longer scale. I found him removed from his cottage to a house of considerable size, about three-quarters of a mile distant, called Allan Bank. This house had been very recently erected, at an expense of about £1500, by a gentleman from Liverpool, a merchant, and also a lawyer in some department or other. It was not yet completely finished; and an odd accident was reported to me as having befallen it in its earliest stage. The walls had been finished, and this event was to be celebrated at the village inn with an *ovation*, previously to the *triumph* that would follow on the roof-raising. The workmen had all housed themselves at the *Red Lion*, and were beginning their carouse, when up rode a traveller, who brought them the unseasonable news, that, whilst riding along the vale, he had beheld the downfall of the whole building. Out the men rushed, hoping that this might be a hoax; but too surely they found his report true, and their own festival premature. A little malice mingled unavoidably with the laughter of the Dalesmen; for it happened that the Liverpool gentleman had offered a sort of insult to the native artists, by bring-

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ing down both masons and carpenters from his own town; an unwise plan, for they were necessarily unacquainted with many points of local skill; and it was to some ignorance in their mode of laying the stones that the accident was due. The house had one or two capital defects — it was cold, damp, and, to all appearance, incurably smoky. Upon this latter defect, by the way, Wordsworth founded a claim, not for diminution of rent, but absolutely for entire immunity from any rent at all. It was truly comical to hear him argue the point with the Liverpool proprietor, Mr. C. He went on dilating on the hardship of living in such a house; of the injury, or suffering, at least, sustained by the eyes; until, at last, he had drawn a picture of himself as a very ill used man; and I seriously expected to hear him sum up by demanding a round sum for damages. Mr. C. was a very good-natured man, calm, and gentlemanlike in his manners. He had also a considerable respect for Wordsworth, derived, it may be supposed, not from his writings, but from the authority (which many more besides him could not resist) of his conversation. However, he looked grave and perplexed. Nor do I know how the matter ended; but I mention it as an illustration of Wordsworth's keen spirit of business. Whilst foolish people supposed him a mere honeyed sentimentalist, speaking only in zephyrs and bucolics, he was in fact a somewhat hard pursuer of what he thought fair advantages.

In the February which followed, I left Allan Bank; but upon Miss Wordsworth's happening to volunteer the task of furnishing for my use the cottage so recently occupied by her brother's family, I took it upon a seven years' lease. And thus it happened — this I mean was the mode of it, (for, at any rate, I should have settled somewhere in the country,) that I became a resident in Grasmere.

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CHAPTER XVII.

SOCIETY OF THE LAKES.

In February, as I have said, of 1809, I quitted Allan Bank; and, from that time until the depth of summer, Miss Wordsworth was employed in the task she had volunteered, of renewing and furnishing the little cottage in which I was to succeed the illustrious tenant who had, in my mind, hallowed the rooms by a seven years' occupation, during, perhaps, the happiest period of his life — the early years of his marriage, and of his first acquaintance with parental affections. Cottage, immortal in my remembrance! as well it might be; for this cottage I retained through just seven-and-twenty years: this was the scene of struggles the most tempestuous and bitter within my own mind: this the scene of my despondency and unhappiness: this the scene of my happiness — a happiness which justified the faith of man's *earthly* lot, as, upon the whole, a dowry from heaven. It was, in its exterior, not so much a picturesque cottage — for its outline and proportions, its windows and its chimneys, were not sufficiently marked and effective for the picturesque* — as it was lovely: one gable end was, indeed,

* The idea of the picturesque is one which did not exist at all until the post-Christian ages; neither amongst the Grecians nor amongst the Romans; and *therefore*, as respects one reason, it was, that the art of landscape painting did not exist (except in a Chinese infancy, and as a

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most gorgeously appareled in ivy, and so far picturesque; but the principal side, or what might be called front, as it presented itself to the road, and was most illuminated by windows, was embossed — nay, it might be said, smothered — in roses of different species, amongst which the moss and the damask prevailed. These, together with as much

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mere trick of inventive ingenuity) amongst the finest artists of Greece. What *is* picturesque, as placed in relation to the beautiful and the sublime? It is (to define it by the very shortest form of words) the characteristic, pushed into a sensible excess. The prevailing character of any natural object, no matter how little attractive it may be for beauty, is always interesting for itself, *as* the character and hieroglyphic symbol of the purposes pursued by Nature in the determination of its form, style of motion, texture of superficies, relation of parts, &c.

Thus, for example, an expression of dulness and somnolent torpor does not ally itself with grace or elegance; but, in combination with strength and other qualities, it may compose a character of serviceable and patient endurance, as in the cart-horse, having unity in itself, and tending to one class of uses sufficient to mark it out by circumscription for a distinct and separate contemplation. Now, in combination with certain counteracting circumstances, as with the momentary energy of some great effort, much of this peculiar character might be lost, or defeated, or dissipated. On that account, the skilful observer will seek out circumstances that are in harmony with the principal tendencies and assist them; such, suppose, as a state of lazy relaxation from labor, and the fall of heavy drenching rain causing the head to droop, and the shaggy main, together with the fetlocks, to weep. These, and other circumstances of attitude, &c., bring out the character or prevailing tendency of the animal in some excess; and, in such a case, we call the resulting effect to the eye — picturesque: or, in fact, *characteresque*. In extending this speculation to objects of art and human purposes, there is something more required of subtle investigation. Meantime, it is evident that neither the sublime nor the beautiful depends upon any *secondary* interest of a purpose or of a character expressing that purpose. They (confining the case to visual objects) court the *primary* interest involved in that (form, color, texture, attitude, motion,) which forces admiration, which fascinates the eye, for itself, and without a question of any distinct purpose: and, instead of character — that is, discriminating and separating expression, tending to the special and the individual — they both agree in pursuing the Catholic — the Normal — the Ideal.

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jessamine and honeysuckle as could find room to flourish, were not only in themselves a most interesting garniture for a humble cottage wall, but they also performed the acceptable service of breaking the unpleasant glare that would else have wounded the eye, from the whitewash; a glare which, having been renewed amongst the general preparations against my coming to inhabit the house, could not be sufficiently subdued in tone for the artist's eye until the storm of several winters had weather-stained and tamed down its brilliancy. The Westmoreland cottages, as a class, have long been celebrated for their picturesque forms, and very justly so: in no part of the world are cottages to be found more strikingly interesting to the eye by their general outlines, by the sheltered porches of their entrances, by their exquisite chimneys, by their rustic windows, and by the distribution of the parts. These parts are on a larger scale, both as to number and size, than a stranger would expect to find as dependencies and out-houses attached to dwelling-houses so modest; chiefly from the necessity of making provision, both in fuel for themselves, and in hay, straw, and brackens for the cattle against the long winter. But, in praising the Westmoreland dwellings, it must be understood that only those of the native Dalesmen are contemplated; for as to those raised by the alien intruders — 'the lakers,' or 'foreigners' as they are sometimes called by the old indigenous possessors of the soil — these being designed to exhibit 'a taste' and an eye for the picturesque, are pretty often mere models of deformity, as vulgar and as silly as it is well possible for any object to be, in a case where, after all, the workman, and obedience to custom, and the necessities of the ground, &c., will often step in to compel the architects into common sense and propriety. The main defect in Scottish scenery, the eyesore that

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disfigures so many charming combinations of landscape, is the offensive style of the rural architecture; but still, even where it is worst, the *mode* of its offence is not by affectation and conceit, and preposterous attempts at realizing sublime, Gothic, or castellated effects in little gingerbread ornaments, and 'tobacco pipes,' and make-believe parapets, and towers like kitchen or hot-house flues; but in the hard undisguised pursuit of mere coarse uses and needs of life.

Too often, the rustic mansion, that should speak of decent poverty and seclusion, peaceful and comfortable, wears the most repulsive air of town confinement and squalid indigence; the house being built of substantial stone, three stories high, or even four, the roof of massy slate; and everything strong which respects the future outlay of the proprietor — everything frail which respects the comfort of the inhabitants: windows broken and stuffed up with rags or old hats; steps and door encrusted with dirt; and the whole tarnished with smoke. Poverty — how different the face it wears looking with meagre staring eyes from such a city dwelling as this, and when it peeps out, with rosy cheeks, from amongst clustering roses and woodbines, at a little lattice, from a little one-story cottage! Are, then, the main characteristics of the Westmoreland dwelling-houses imputable to superior taste? By no means. Spite of all that I have heard Mr. Wordsworth and others say in maintaining that opinion, I, for my part, do and must hold, that the Dalesmen produce none of the happy effects which frequently arise in their domestic architecture under any search after beautiful forms, a search which they despise with a sort of Vandal dignity; no, nor with any sense or consciousness of their success. How then? Is it accident — mere casual good luck — that has brought forth,

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for instance, so many exquisite forms of chimneys? Not so; but it is this: it is good sense, on the one hand, bending and conforming to the dictates or even the suggestions of the climate, and the local circumstances of rocks, water, currents of air, &c.; and, on the other hand, wealth sufficient to arm the builder with all suitable means for giving effect to his purpose, and to evade the necessity of make-shifts. But the radical ground of the interest attached to Westmoreland cottage architecture, lies in its submission to the determining agencies of the surrounding circumstances; such of them, I mean, as are permanent, and have been gathered from long experience. The porch, for instance, which does so much to take away from a house the character of a rude box, pierced with holes for air, light, and ingress, has evidently been dictated by the sudden rushes of wind through the mountain 'ghylls,' which make some kind of protection necessary to the ordinary door; and this reason has been strengthened in cases of houses near to a road, by the hospitable wish to provide a sheltered seat for the wayfarer; most of these porches being furnished with one in each of the two recesses, to the right and to the left.

The long winter again, as I have already said, and the artificial prolongation of the winter, by the necessity of keeping the sheep long upon the low grounds, creates a call for large out-houses; and these, for the sake of warmth, are usually placed at right angles to the house; which the effect of making a much larger system of parts than would else arise. But perhaps the main feature, which gives character to the pile of building, is the roof, and, above all, the chimneys. It is the remark of an accomplished Edinburgh artist, H. W. Williams, in the course of his strictures* upon the domestic architecture

* Travels in Italy, Greece, and the Ionian Islands, vol. i. p. 74, 75.

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of the Italians, and especially of the Florentines, that the character of buildings, in certain circumstances, 'depends wholly or chiefly on the form of the roof and the chimney. This,' he goes on, 'is particularly the case in Italy, where more variety and taste is displayed in the chimneys than in the buildings to which they belong. These chimneys are as peculiar and characteristic as palm trees in a tropical climate.' Again, in speaking of Calabria and the Ionian Islands, he says—'We were forcibly struck with the consequence which the beauty of the chimneys imparted to the character of the whole building.' Now, in Great Britain, he complains, with reason, of the very opposite result; not the plain building ennobled by the chimney; but the chimney degrading the noble building; and in Edinburgh, especially, where the homely and inelegant appearance of the chimneys contrasts most disadvantageously and offensively with the beauty of the buildings which they surmount.' Even here, however, he makes an exception for some of the *old* buildings, 'whose chimneys,' he admits, 'are very tastefully decorated, and contribute essentially to the beauty of the general effect.' It is probable, therefore, and many houses of the Elizabethan era confirm it, that a better taste prevailed, in this point, amongst our ancestors, both Scottish and English; that this elder fashion travelled, together with many other usages, from the richer parts of Scotland to the Borders, and thence to the vales of Westmoreland; where they have continued to prevail, from their affectionate adhesion to all patriarchal customs. Some undoubtedly, of these Westmoreland forms have been dictated by the necessities of the weather, and the systematic energies of human skill, from age to age, applied to the very difficult task of training smoke into obedience, under the peculiar difficulties pre-

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sented by the sites of Westmoreland houses. These are chosen, generally speaking, with the same good sense and regard to domestic comfort, as the primary consideration (without, however, disdainfully slighting the sentiment, whatever it were, of peace, of seclusion, of gaiety, of solemnity, the special 'religio loci') which seems to have guided the choice of those who founded religious houses.

And here, again, by the way, appears a marked difference between the Dalesmen and the intrusive gentry — not creditable to the latter. The native Dalesman, well aware of the fury with which the wind often gathers and eddies about any eminence, however trifling its elevation, never thinks of planting his house *there:* whereas the stranger, singly solicitous about the prospect or the range of lake which his gilt saloons are to command, chooses his site too often upon points better fitted for a temple of Eolus than a human dwelling-place; and he belts his house with balconies and verandas that a mountain gale often tears away in mockery. The Dalesman, wherever his choice is not circumscribed, selects a sheltered spot, (a *wray*,* for instance,) which protects him from the wind altogether, upon one or two quarters, and on all quarters from its tornado violence: he takes good care, at the same time, to be within a few feet of a mountain beck: a caution so little heeded by some of the villa founders, that absolutely, in a country surcharged with water, they have sometimes found themselves driven, by sheer necessity, to the after-thought of sinking a well. The very best situation, however, in other respects, may be bad in one; and sometimes find its very advantages, and the beetling crags which protect its rear, obstructions the most permanent to the ascent of smoke; and it is in the contest with these natural

* *Wraie* is the old Danish, or Icelandic word for *angle*. Hence the many 'wrays' in the lake district.

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baffling repellents of the smoke, and in the variety of artifices for modifying its vertical, or for accomplishing its lateral escape, that have arisen the large and graceful variety of chimney models. My cottage, wanting this primary feature of elegance in the constituents of Westmoreland cottage architecture, and wanting also another very interesting feature of the elder architecture, annually becoming more and more rare, viz., the outside gallery, (which is sometimes merely of wood, but is much more striking when provided for in the original construction of the house, and completely *enfoncé* in the masonry,) could not rank high amongst the picturesque houses of the country; those, at least, which are such by virtue of their architectural form. It was, however, very irregular in its outline to the rear, by the aid of one little projecting room, and also of a stable and little barn, in immediate contact with the dwelling-house. It had, besides, the great advantage of a varying height: two sides being about fifteen or sixteen feet high from the exposure of both stories; whereas the other two being swathed about by a little orchard that rose rapidly and unequally towards the vast mountain range in the rear, exposed only the upper story; and, consequently, on those sides the elevation rarely rose beyond seven or eight feet. All these accidents of irregular form and outline, gave to the house some little pretensions to a picturesque character; whilst its 'separable accidents' (as the logicians say) — its bowery roses and jessamine clothed it in loveliness — its associations with Wordsworth — crowned it, to my mind, with historical dignity; and, finally, my own twenty-seven years off-and-on connection with it, have, by ties personal and indestructible, endeared it to my heart so unspeakably beyond all other houses, that even now I rarely dream through four nights running, that I do not find myself

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(and others beside) in some one of those rooms; and, most probably, the last cloudy delirium of approaching death will re-install me in some chamber of that same humble cottage. 'What a tale,' says Foster, the eloquent essayist — 'what a tale could be told by many a room, were the walls endowed with memory and speech!' or, in the more impassioned expressions of Wordsworth —

> 'Ah! what a lesson to a thoughtless man
> ——— if any gladsome field of earth
> Could render back the sighs to which it hath responded,
> Or echo the sad steps by which it hath been trod!'

And equally affecting it would be, if such a field or such a house could render up the echoes of joy, of festal music, of jubilant laughter — the innocent mirth of infants, or the gaiety, not less innocent, of youthful mothers — equally affecting would be such a reverberation of forgotten household happiness, with the re-echoing records of sighs and groans. And few indeed are the houses that, within a period no longer than from the beginning of the century to 1835 (so long was it either mine or Wordsworth's) have crowded such ample materials for those echoes, whether sorrowful or joyous.

SOCIETY OF THE LAKES.

My cottage was ready in the summer; but I was playing truant amongst the valleys of Somersetshire; and, meantime, different families, throughout the summer, borrowed the cottage of the Wordsworths as my friends: they consisted chiefly of ladies; and some, by the delicacy of their attentions to the flowers, &c., gave me reason to consider their visit during my absence as a real honor; others — such is the difference of people in this world — left the rudest memorials of their careless habits impressed upon

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house, furniture, garden, &c. In November, at last, I, the long-expected, made my appearance ; some little sensation did really and naturally attend my coming, for most of the draperies belonging to beds, curtains, &c., had been sewed by the young women of that or the adjoining vales. This had caused me to be talked of. Many had seen me on my visit to the Wordsworths. Miss Wordsworth had introduced the curious to a knowledge of my age, name, prospects, and all the rest of what can be interesting to know. Even the old people of the vale were a little excited by the accounts (somewhat exaggerated, perhaps) of the never ending books that continued to arrive in packing-cases for several months in succession. Nothing in these vales so much fixes the attention and respect of the people as the reputation of being a 'far learn'd' man. So far, therefore, I had already bespoke the favorable opinion of the Dalesmen. And a separate kind of interest arose amongst mothers and daughters, in the knowledge that I should necessarily want what — in a sense somewhat different from the general one — is called a 'housekeeper;' that is, not an upper servant to superintend others, but one who could undertake, in her own person, all the duties of the house. It is not discreditable to these worthy people that several of the richest and most respectable families were anxious to secure the place for a daughter. Had I been a dissipated young man, I have good reason to know that there would have been no canvassing at all for the situation. But partly my books spoke for the character of my pursuits with these simple-minded people — partly the introduction of the Wordsworths guaranteed the safety of such a service. Even then, had I persisted in my original intention of bringing a man-servant, no respectable young woman would have accepted the place. As it was, and it being understood that I had renounced this intention, many,

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in a gentle, diffident way, applied for the place, or their parents on their behalf. And I mention the fact, because it illustrates one feature in the manners of this primitive and peculiar people, the Dalesmen of Westmoreland. However wealthy, they do not think it degrading to permit even the eldest daughter to go out a few years to service. The object is not to gain a sum of money in wages, but that sort of household experience which is supposed to be unattainable upon a suitable scale out of a gentleman's family. So far was this carried, that, amongst the offers made to myself, was one from a young woman whose family was amongst the very oldest in the country, and who was at that time under an engagement of marriage to the very richest young man in the vale. She and her future husband had a reasonable prospect of possessing ten thousand pounds in land; and yet neither her own family nor her husband's objected to her seeking such a place as I could offer. Her character and manners, I ought to add, were so truly excellent, and won respect so inevitably from everybody, that nobody could wonder at the honorable confidence reposed in her by her manly and spirited young lover. The issue of the matter, as respected my service, was, why I do not know, that Miss Wordsworth did not accept of her; and she fulfilled her purpose in another family, a very grave and respectable one, in Kendal. She stayed about a couple of years, returned, and married the young man to whom she had engaged herself, and is now the prosperous mother of a fine handsome family; and she, together with her mother-in-law, are the two leading matrons of the vale.

It was on a November night, about ten o'clock, that I first found myself installed in a house of my own — this cottage, so memorable from its past tenant to all men, so memorable to myself from all which has since past in con-

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nection with it. A writer in *The Quarterly Review*, in noticing the autobiography of Dr. Watson, the Bishop of Llandaff, has thought fit to say that the lakes, of course, afforded no society capable of appreciating this commonplace, coarse-minded man of talents. The person who said this I understand to have been Dr. Whittaker, the respectable antiquary. Now, that the reader may judge of the propriety with which this was asserted, I shall slightly rehearse the muster-roll of our lake society, as it existed at the time when I seated myself in my Grasmere cottage. I will undertake to say, that the meanest person in the whole scattered community was more extensively accomplished than the good bishop, was more conscientiously true to his duties, and had more varied powers of conversation. Wordsworth and Coleridge, then living at Allan Bank, in Grasmere, I will not notice in such a question. Southey, living thirteen miles off, at Keswick, I have already noticed; and he needs no *proneur*. I will begin with Windermere. At Clappersgate, a little hamlet of perhaps six houses, on its north-west angle, and about five miles from my cottage, resided two Scottish ladies, daughters of Dr. Cullen, the famous physician and nosologist. They were universally beloved for their truly kind dispositions, and the firm independence of their conduct. They had been reduced from great affluence to a condition of rigorous poverty. Their father had made what should have been a fortune by his practice. The good doctor, however, was careless of his money in proportion to the facility with which he made it. All was put into a box, open to the whole family. Breach of confidence, in the most thoughtless use of this money, there could be none; because no restraint in that point, beyond what honor and good sense imposed, was laid upon any of the elder children. Under such regulations, it may be imagined that Dr. Cullen would not accumulate any

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very large capital; and, at his death, the family, for the first time, found themselves in embarrassed circumstances. Of the two daughters who belonged to our lake population, one had married a Mr. Millar, son to the celebrated professor Millar of Glasgow. This gentleman had died in America; and Mrs. Millar was now a childless widow. The other still remained unmarried. Both were equally independent; and independent even with regard to their nearest relatives; for, even from their brother — who had risen to rank and affluence as a Scottish judge, under the title of Lord Cullen — they declined to receive assistance; and except for some small addition made to their income by a novel called 'Home,' [in as many as seven volumes, I really believe,] by Miss Cullen, their expenditure was rigorously shaped to meet that very slender income, which they drew from *their* shares of the patrimonial wrecks. More honorable and modest independence, or poverty more gracefully supported, I have rarely known.

Meantime, these ladies, though literary and very agreeable in conversation, could not be classed with what now began to be known as the *lake* community of literati; for they took no interest in any one of the lake poets; did not affect to take any; and I am sure they were not aware of so much value in any one thing these poets had written, as could make it worth while even to look into their books; and accordingly, as well-bred women, they took the same course as was pursued for several years by Mrs. Hannah More, viz., cautiously to avoid mentioning their names in my presence. This was natural enough in women who had probably built their early admiration upon French models, (for Mrs. Millar used to tell me that she regarded the 'Mahomet' of Voltaire as the most perfect of human compositions,) and still more so at a period when almost all the world had surrendered their opinions and their

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literary consciences (so to speak) into the keeping of *The Edinburgh Review;* in whose favor, besides, those ladies had the pardonable prepossessions of national pride, as a collateral guarantee of that implicit faith which, in those days, stronger minded people than they took a pride in professing. Still, in defiance of prejudices mustering so strongly to support their blindness, and the still stronger support which this blindness drew from their total ignorance of everything either done or attempted by the lake poets, these amiable women persisted in one uniform tone of courteous forbearance, as often as any question arose to implicate the names either of Wordsworth or of Coleridge; any question about them, their books, their families, or anything that was theirs. They thought it strange, indeed, (for so much I heard by a circuitous course,) that promising and intellectual young men — men educated at great universities, such as Mr. Wilson of Elleray, or myself, or a few others who had paid us visits, — should possess so deep a veneration for these writers; but evidently this was an infatuation — a craze, originating, perhaps, in personal connections; and, as the craze of valued friends, to be treated with tenderness. For us therefore — for our sakes — they took a religious care to suppress all allusion to these disreputable names; and it is pretty plain how sincere their indifference must have been with regard to these neighboring authors, from the evidence of one fact, viz., that when, in 1810, Mr. Coleridge began to issue, in weekly numbers, his *Friend*, which, by the prospectus, held forth a promise of meeting all possible tastes — literary, philosophic, political — even this comprehensive field of interest, combined with the adventitious attraction (so very unusual, and so little to have been looked for in that thinly-peopled region) of a local origin, from the bosom of those very hills at the foot of which (though on a different side) they

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were themselves living, failed altogether to stimulate their torpid curiosity; so perfect was their persuasion beforehand, that no good thing could by possibility come out of a community that had fallen under the ban of the Edinburgh critics.

At the same time, it is melancholy to confess that, partly from the dejection of Coleridge; his constant immersion in opium at that period; his hatred of the duties he had assumed, or at least of their too frequent and periodical recurrence; and partly also from the bad selection of topics for a miscellaneous audience; from the heaviness and obscurity with which they were treated; and from the total want of variety, in consequence of defective arrangements on his part for ensuring the co-operation of his friends; no conceivable act of authorship that Coleridge *could* have perpetrated, no possible overt act of dulness and somnolent darkness that he *could* have authorized, was so well fitted to sustain the impression, with regard to him and his friends, that had pre-occupied these ladies' minds. *Habes confitentem reum!* I am sure they would exclaim; not perhaps confessing to that form of delinquency which they had been taught to expect — trivial or extravagant sentimentalism; *Germanity* alternating with tumid inanity; not this, but something quite as bad or worse, viz., palpable dulness — dulness that could be felt and handled — rayless obscurity as to the thoughts — and communicated in language that, according to the Bishop of Llandaff's complaint, was not always English. For, though the particular words cited for blame were certainly known to the vocabulary of metaphysics, and had even been employed by a writer of Queen Anne's reign, (Leibnitz,) who, if any, had the gift of translating dark thoughts into plain ones — still it was intolerable, in point of good sense, that one who had to win his way into the public ear, should begin by bringing,

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before a popular and miscellaneous audience, themes that could require such startling and revolting words. *The Delphic Oracle* was the kindest of the nick-names which the literary taste of Windermere conferred upon the new journal. This was the laughing suggestion of a clever young lady, a daughter of the Bishop of Llandaff, who stood in a neutral position with regard to Coleridge. But others there were amongst his supposed friends, who felt even more keenly than this young lady, the shocking want of adaptation to his audience in the choice of matter; and, even to an audience better qualified to meet such matter, the want of adaptation in the mode of publication, viz., periodically, and by weekly recurrence; a mode of soliciting the public attention which even authorizes the expectation of current topics — topics arising each with its own week or day. One in particular I remember, of these disapproving friends; a Mr. Blair, an accomplished scholar, and a frequent visiter at Elleray, who started the playful scheme of a satirical rejoinder to Coleridge's *Friend*, under the name of *The Enemy*, which was to follow always in the wake of its leader, and to stimulate Coleridge, [at the same time that it amused the public,] by attic banter, or by downright opposition, and showing fight in good earnest. It was a plan that might have done good service to the world, and chiefly through a seasonable irritation (never so much wanted as then) applied to Coleridge's too lethargic state: in fact, throughout life, it is most deeply to be regretted that Coleridge's powers and peculiar learning were never forced out into a large display by intense and almost persecuting opposition. However, this scheme, like thousands of other day-dreams and bubbles that rose upon the breath of morning spirits and buoyant youth, fell to the ground; and, in the meantime, no enemy to *The Friend* appeared that was capable of

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matching *The Friend* when left to itself and its own careless or vagrant guidance. *The Friend* ploughed heavily along for nine-and-twenty numbers; and our fair recusants and non-conformists in all that regarded the lake poetry or authorship, the two Scottish ladies of Clappersgate, found no reasons for changing their opinions; but continued, for the rest of my acquaintance with them, to practise the same courteous and indulgent silence, whenever the names of Coleridge or Wordsworth happened to be mentioned.

In taking leave of these Scottish ladies, it may be interesting to mention that, previously to their final farewell to our lake society, upon taking up their permanent residence in York, (which step they adopted — partly, I believe, to enjoy the more diversified society which that great city yields, and, at any rate, the more *accessible* society than amongst mountain districts — partly with a view to the cheapness of that rich district in comparison with our sterile soil, poor towns, and poor agriculture,) somewhere about the May or June of 1810, I think — they were able, by a long preparatory course of economy, to invite to the English lakes a family of foreigners — what shall I call them? — a family of Anglo-Gallo-Americans, from the Carolinas. The invitation had been of old standing, and offered, as an expression of gratitude, from these ladies, for many hospitalities and friendly services rendered by the two heads of that family to Mrs. Millar, in former years, and under circumstances of peculiar trial. Mrs. Millar had been hastily summoned from Scotland to attend her husband at Charleston; him, on her arrival, she found dying; and, whilst overwhelmed by this sudden blow, it may be imagined that the young widow would find trials enough for her fortitude, without needing any addition to the load, from friendliness amongst

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a nation of strangers, and from total solitude. These evils were spared to Mrs. Millar, through the kind offices and disinterested exertions of an American gentleman, (French by birth, but American by adoption,) M. Simond, who took upon himself the cares of superintending Mr. Millar's funeral through all its details; and, by this most seasonable service, secured to the heart-stricken widow that most welcome of privileges in all situations, the privilege of unmolested privacy; for assuredly the heaviest aggravation of such bereavements lies in the necessity, too often imposed by circumstances, upon him or upon her, who may happen to be the sole responsible representative, and, at the same time, the dearest friend of the deceased, of superintending the funeral arrangements. In the very agonies of a new-born grief, whilst the heart is yet raw and bleeding, the mind not yet able to comprehend its loss, the very light of day hateful to the eyes; the necessity, even at such a moment arises, and without a day's delay, and of facing strangers, talking with strangers, discussing the most empty details, with a view to the most sordid of considerations — cheapness, convenience, custom, and local prejudice; and, finally, talking about whom? why, the very child, husband, wife, who has just been torn away; and this, too, under a consciousness that the being so hallowed is, as to these strangers, an object equally indifferent with any one person whatsoever that died a thousand years ago. Fortunate, indeed, is that person who has a natural friend, or, in default of such a friend, who finds a volunteer stepping forward to relieve him from a conflict of feeling so peculiarly unseasonable. Mrs. Millar never forgot the service which had been rendered to her; and she was happy when M. Simond, who had become a wealthy citizen of America, at length held out the prospect of coming to profit by her hospitable

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attentions, amongst that circle of friends with whom she and her sister had surrounded themselves in so interesting a part of England.

M. Simond had been a French emigrant; not, I believe, so far connected with the privileged orders of his country, or with any political party, as to be absolutely forced out of France by danger or by panic; but he had shared in the feelings of those who were. Revolutionary France, in the anarchy of the transition state, and still heaving to and fro with the subsiding shocks of the great earthquake, did not suit him: there was neither the polish which he sought in its manners, nor the security which he sought in its institutions. England he did not love; but yet, if not England, some country which had grown up from English foundations was the country for him; and, as he augured no rest for France, through some generations to come, but an endless succession of revolution to revolution, anarchy to anarchy, he judged it best that, having expatriated himself and lost one country, he should solemnly adopt another. Accordingly, he became an American citizen. English he already spoke with propriety and fluency. And, finally, he cemented his English connections by marrying an English lady, the niece of John Wilkes. 'What John Wilkes?' asked a lady, one of a dinner-party at Calgarth, (the house of Dr. Watson, the celebrated Bishop of Llandaff,) upon the banks of Windermere. — '*What* John Wilkes!' re-echoed the Bishop, with a vehement intonation of scorn; '*What* John Wilkes, indeed! as if there ever was more than one John Wilkes — *fama super æthera notos!*' — 'O, my Lord, I beg your pardon,' said an old lady, nearly connected with the Bishop, 'there were two; I knew one of them: he was a little, ill-looking man, and he kept the Blue Boar at ———.' — 'At Flamborough Head!' roared

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the Bishop, with a savage expression of disgust. The old lady, suspecting that some screw was loose in the matter, thought it prudent to drop the contest; but she murmured, *sotto voce*, 'No, not at Flamborough Head, but at Market Drayton.' Madame Simond, then, was the niece, not of the ill-looking host of the Blue Boar, but of *the* Wilkes, so memorably connected with the *parvanimities* of the English government at one period; with the casuistry of our English constitution, by the questions raised in his person as to the effects of expulsion from the House of Commons, &c. &c.; and, finally, with the history of English jurisprudence, by his intrepidity on the matter of general warrants. M. Simond's party, when at length it arrived, consisted of two persons besides himself, viz., his wife, the niece of Wilkes, and a young lady of eighteen, standing in the relation of grand-niece to the same memorable person. This young lady, highly pleasing in her person, on quitting the lake district, went northwards, with her party, to Edinburgh, and there became acquainted with Mr. Francis Jeffrey, the present Lord Jeffrey, who naturally enough, fell in love with her, followed her across the Atlantic, and in Charleston, I believe, received the honor of her hand in marriage.

I, as one of Mrs. Millar's friends, put in my claim to entertain her American party in my turn. One long summer's day, they all came over to my cottage in Grasmere; and as it became my duty to do the honors of our vale to the strangers, I thought that I could not discharge the duty in a way more likely to interest them all, than by conducting them through to Grasmere into the little inner chamber of Easedale; and there, within sight of the solitary cottage, Blentarn Ghyll, telling them the story of the Greens; because, in this way, I had an opportunity, at the same time, of showing the scenery from

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some of the best points, and of opening to them a few glimpses of the character and customs which distinguish this section of the English yeomanry from others. The story did certainly interest them all; and thus far I succeeded in my duties as Cicerone and Amphytrion of the day. But throughout the rest of our long morning's ramble, I remember that accident, or, possibly, the politeness of M. Simond and his French sympathy with a young man's natural desire to stand well in the eyes of a handsome young woman, so ordered it, that I had constantly the honor of being Miss Wilkes' immediate companion, as the narrowness of the path pretty generally threw us into ranks of two and two. Having, therefore, through so many hours, the opportunity of an exclusive conversation with this young lady, it would have been my own fault had I failed to carry off an impression of her great good sense, as well as her amiable and spirited character. Certainly I did *mon possible* to entertain her, both on her own account and as the visiter of my Scottish friends. But, in the midst of all my efforts, I had the mortification to feel that I was rowing against the stream; that there was a silent body of prepossession against the whole camp of the lakers, which nothing could unsettle. Miss Wilkes naturally looked up, with some feelings of respect, to M. Simond, who, by his marriage with her aunt, had become her own guardian and protector. Now, M. Simond, of all the men in the world, was the last who could have appreciated an English poet. He had, to begin with, a French inaptitude for apprehending poetry at all; any poetry, that is, which transcends manners and the interests of social life. Then, unfortunately, not merely through what he had not, but equally through what he had, this cleverish Frenchman was, by whole diameters of the earth, remote from the station at which he

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could comprehend Wordsworth. He was a thorough knowing man of the world, keen, sharp as a razor, and valuing nothing but the tangible and the ponderable. He had a smattering of mechanics, of physiology, geology, mineralogy, and all other *ologies* whatsoever; he had, besides, at his fingers' ends, a huge body of statistical facts—how many people did live, could live, ought to live, in each particular district of each manufacturing county; how many old women of eighty-three there ought to be to so many little children of one; how many murders ought to be committed in a month by each town of five thousand souls; and so on *ad infinitum*. And to such a thin shred had his old French politeness been worn down by American attrition, that his thin lips could, with much ado, contrive to disguise his contempt for those who failed to meet him exactly upon his own field, with exactly his own quality of knowledge. Yet, after all, it was but a little *case* of knowledge, that he had packed up neatly for a make-shift; just what corresponds to the little assortment of razors, tooth-brushes, nail-brushes, hair-brushes, cork-screw, gimlet, &c. &c., which one carries in one's trunk, in a red Morocco case, to meet the casualties of a journey. The more was one indignant at being the object of such a man's contempt, the more heartily did one disdain his disdain, and recalcitrate his kicks.

On the single day which Mrs. Millar could spare for Grasmere, I had taken care to ask Wordsworth amongst those who were to meet the party. Wordsworth came; but, by instinct, he and Monsieur Simond knew and recoiled from each other. They met, they saw, they *inter-despised*. Wordsworth, on his side, seemed so heartily to despise M. Simond, that he did not stir or make an effort to right himself under any misapprehension of the Frenchman, but coolly acquiesced in any and every infer-

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ence which he might be pleased to draw; whilst M. Simond, double-charged with contempt from *The Edinburgh Review*, and from the report (I cannot doubt) of his present hostess, manifestly thought Wordsworth too abject almost for the trouble of too openly disdaining him. More than one of us could have done justice on this malefactor, by meeting M. Simond on his own ground, and taking the conceit out of him most thoroughly. I was one of those; for I had the very knowledge, or some of it, that he most paraded. But one of us was lazy; another thought it not *tanti;* and I, for my part, in my own house, could not move upon such a service. And in those days, moreover, when as yet I loved Wordsworth not less than I venerated him, a success that would have made him suffer in any man's opinion by comparison with myself, would have been painful to my feelings. Never did party meet more exquisitely ill-assorted; never did party separate with more exquisite and cordial disgust, in its principal members, towards each other. I mention the case at all in order to illustrate the abject condition of worldly opinion in which Wordsworth then lived. Perhaps his ill fame was just then in its meridian; for M. Simond, soon after, published his English tour in two octavo volumes; and, of course, he goes over his residence at the lakes; yet it is a strong fact that, according to my remembrance, he does not vouchsafe to mention such a person as Wordsworth.

One anecdote, before parting with these ladies, I will mention as received from Miss Cullen on her personal knowledge of the fact. There are stories current which resemble this; but wanting that immediate guarantee for their accuracy which, in this case, I at least was obliged to admit, in the attestation of so perfectly veracious a reporter as this excellent lady. A female friend of her

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own, a person of family and consideration, being on the eve of undertaking a visit to a remote part of the kingdom, dreamed that, on reaching the end of her journey, and drawing up to the steps of the door, a footman, with a very marked and forbidding expression of countenance, his complexion pale and bloodless, and his manners sullen, presented himself to let down the steps of her carriage. This same man, at a subsequent point of her dream, appeared to be stealing up a private staircase, with some murderous instruments in his hands, towards a bed-room door. This dream was repeated, I think, twice. Some time after, the lady, accompanied by a grown-up daughter, accomplished her journey. Great was the shock which awaited her on reaching her friend's house: a servant, corresponding in all points to the shadowy outline of her dream, equally bloodless in complexion, and equally gloomy in manner, appeared at her carriage door. The issue of the story was — that upon a particular night, after a stay of some length, the lady grew unaccountably nervous; resisted her feelings for some time; but at length, at the entreaty of her daughter, who slept in the same room, suffered some communication of the case to be made to a gentleman resident in the house, who had not yet retired to rest. This gentleman, struck by the dream, and still more on recalling to mind some suspicious preparations, as if for a hasty departure, in which he had detected the servant, waited in concealment until three o'clock in the morning — at which time hearing a stealthy step moving up the staircase, he issued with fire-arms, and met the man at the lady's door, so equipped as to leave no doubt of his intentions; which possibly contemplated only robbing of the lady's jewels, but possibly also murder in a case of extremity. There are other stories with some of the same circumstances; and, in particular, I remember

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one very like it in Dr. Abercrombie's 'Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers,' [1830,] p. 283. But in this version of Dr. Abercrombie's, (supposing it another version of the same story,) the striking circumstance of anticipating the servant's features is omitted; and in no version, except this of Miss Cullen's, have I heard the names mentioned both of the parties to the affair, and also of the place at which it occurred.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

CHARLES LOYD.

IMMEDIATELY below the little village of Clappersgate, in which the Scottish ladies resided — Mrs. Millar and Mrs. Cullen — runs the wild mountain river called the *Brathay*, which, descending from Langdale head, and soon after becoming confluent with the Rothay, (a brook-like stream that comes originally from Easedale, and takes its course through the two lakes of Grasmere and Rydal,) finally composes a considerable body of water, that flows along, deep, calm, and steady — no longer brawling, bubbling, tumultuous — into the splendid lake of Windermere, the largest of our English waters; or, if not, at least the longest, and of the most extensive circuit. Close to this little river, Brathay, on the farther side, as regards Clappersgate, (and what, though actually part and parcel of a district that is severed by the sea, or by Westmoreland, from Lancashire proper, is yet, from some old legal usage, denominated the Lancashire side of the Brathay,) stands a modest family mansion, called Low Brathay, by way of distinction from another and a larger mansion, about a quarter of a mile beyond it, which, standing upon a little eminence, is called High Brathay.

In this house of Low Brathay lived, and continued to live, for many years, (in fact, until misery, in its sharpest

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form, drove him from his hearth and his household happiness,) Charles L——, the younger; — on his own account, and for his personal qualities, worthy of a separate notice in any biography, howsoever sparing in its digressions; but, viewed in reference to his fortunes, amongst the most interesting men I have known. Never do I reflect upon his hard fate, and the bitter though mysterious persecution of body which pursued him, dogged him, and thickened as life advanced, but I feel gratitude to Heaven for my own exemption from suffering in that particular form; and, in the midst of afflictions, of which two or three have been most hard to bear, because not unmingled with pangs of remorse for the share which I myself may have had in causing them — still, by comparison with the lot of Charles L——, I acknowledge my own to have been happy and serene. Already, on my first hasty visit to Grasmere in 1807, I found Charles L—— settled with his family at Brathay, and a resident there, I believe, of some standing. It was on a wet gloomy evening; and Miss Wordsworth and I were returning from an excursion to Esthwaite Water, when, suddenly, in the midst of blinding rain, without previous notice, she said — Pray, let us call for a few minutes at this house. A garden gate led us into a little shrubbery, chiefly composed of lawns beautifully kept, through which ran a gravel road, just wide enough to admit a single carriage. A minute or so saw us housed in a small comfortable drawing-room, but with no signs of living creatures near it; and, from the accident of double doors, all covered with baize, being scattered about the house, the whole mansion seemed the palace of silence, though populous, I understood, with children. In no long time appeared Mr. L——; soon followed by his youthful wife, both radiant with kindness; and it may be supposed

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that we were not suffered to depart for some hours. I call Mrs. L—— youthful; and so I might call her husband; for both were youthful considered as the parents of a numerous family, six or seven children then living—Charles L—— himself not being certainly more than twenty-seven, and his 'Sophia' perhaps not twenty-five.

On that short visit I saw enough to interest me in both; and two years after, when I became myself a permanent resident in Grasmere, the connection between us became close and intimate. My cottage stood just five miles from Brathay; and there were two mountain roads which shortened the space between us, though not the time nor the toil. But, notwithstanding this distance, often and often, upon the darkest nights, for many years, I used to go over about nine o'clock, or an hour later, and sit with him till one. Mrs. L—— was simply an amiable young woman, of pleasing person, perfectly well principled, and, as a wife and mother, not surpassed by anybody I have known in either of those characters. In figure she somewhat resembled the ever memorable and most excellent Mrs. Jordan; she was exactly of the middle height, and having that slight degree of *embonpoint*, even in youth, which never through life diminishes or increases. Her complexion may be imagined, from the circumstances of her hair being tinged with a slight and not unpleasing shade of red. Finally, in manners, she was remarkably self-possessed, free from all awkward embarrassment, and (to an extent which some people would wonder at in one who had been brought up, I believe, wholly in a great commercial town) perfectly lady-like. So much description is due to one, who, though no authoress, and never making the slightest pretension to talents, was too much connected subsequently with the lakers to be passed over

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in a review of their community. Ah! gentle lady! your head, after struggling through many a year with strange calamities, has found rest at length; but not in English ground, or amongst the mountains which you loved: at Versailles it is, and perhaps within a stone's throw of that Mrs. Jordan whom in so many things you resembled, and most of all in the misery which settled upon your latter years. There you lie, and for ever, whose blooming matronly figure rises up to me at this moment from a depth of thirty years! and your children scattered into all lands.

But for Charles L——, he, by his literary works, is so far known to the public, that, on his own account, he merits some separate notice. His poems do not place him in the class of powerful poets; they are loosely conceived — faultily even at times — and not finished in the execution. But they have a real and a mournful merit under one aspect, which might be so presented to the general reader as to win a peculiar interest for many of them, and for some a permanent place in any judicious *thesaurus* — such as we may some day hope to see drawn off, and carefully filtered, from the enormous mass of poetry produced since the awakening era of the French Revolution. This aspect is founded on the relation which they bear to the real events and the unexaggerated afflictions of his own life. The feelings which he attempts to express were not assumed for effect, nor drawn by suggestion from others, and then transplanted into some ideal experience of his own. They do not belong to the mimetic poetry so extensively cultivated, but they were true solitary sighs, wrung from his own meditative heart by excess of suffering, and by the yearning after old scenes and household faces of an impassioned memory, brooding over vanished happiness, and cleaving to those early times

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when life wore even for *his* eyes the golden light of Paradise. But he had other and higher accomplishments of intellect than he showed in his verses, as I shall presently explain; and of a nature which make it difficult to bring them adequately within the reader's apprehension.

Meantime, I will sketch an outline of poor L——'s history, so far as I can pretend to know it. He was the son, and probably his calamitous life originally dated from his being the son, of Quaker parents. It was said, indeed, by himself as well as others, that the mysterious malady which haunted him, had been derived from an ancestress in the maternal line; and this may have been true; and, for all that, it may also be true that Quaker habits were originally answerable for this legacy of wo. It is sufficiently well known that, in the training of their young people, the Society of Friends make it a point of conscience to apply severe checks to all open manifestations of natural feeling, or of exuberant spirits. Not the passions — they are beyond their control — but the expression of those passions by any natural language; this they lay under the heaviest restraint; and, in many cases, it is possible that such a system of thwarting nature may do no great mischief; just as we see the American Indians, in moulding the plastic skulls of their infants into capricious shapes, do not, after all, much disturb the ordinary course of nature, nor produce the idiots we might have expected. But, then, the reason why such tampering may often terminate in slight results is, because often there is not much to tamper with; the machinery is so slight, and the total range within which it plays is perhaps so narrow, that the difference between its normal action and its widest deviation may, after all, be practically unimportant. For there are many men and women of whom

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I have already said, borrowing the model of the word from Hartley, that they have not so much passions as *passiuncles.* These, however, are in *one* extreme; and others there are and will be, in every class, and under every disadvantage, who are destined to illustrate the very opposite extreme. Great passions — passions pointing to the paths of love, of ambition, of glory, martial or literary — these in men — and in women, again, these, either in some direct shape, or taking the form of intense sympathy with the same passions as moving amongst contemporary men — *will* gleam out fitfully amongst the placid children of Fox and Penn, not less than amongst us who profess no war with the nobler impulses of our nature. And, perhaps, according to the Grecian doctrine of *antiperistasis*, strong untameable passions are more likely to arise, even in consequence of the counteraction. Deep passions undoubtedly lie in the blood and constitution of Englishmen; and Quakers,* after all, do not, by being such, cease, therefore, to be Englishmen.

It is, I have said, sufficiently well known that the Quakers make it a point of their moral economy to lay the severest restraints upon all ebullitions of feeling. Whatever may be the nature of the feeling, whatever its strength, utter itself by word or by gesture it must not; smoulder it may, but it must not break into a flame. This is known; but it is not equally known that this unnatural restraint, falling into collision with two forces at once, the

* In using the term *Quakers*, I hoped it would have been understood, even without any explanation from myself, that I did not mean to use it scornfully or insultingly to that respectable body. But it was the great oversight of their founders, not to have saved them from a nickname, by assuming some formal designation expressive of some capital characteristic. At present, one is in this dilemma; either one must use a tedious periphrasis, (*e. g.*, *the young women of the Society of Friends*,) or the ambiguous one of *young female Friends*.

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force of passion and of youth, not uncommonly records its own injurious tendencies, and publishes the rebellious movements of nature, by distinct and anomalous diseases. And, further, I have been assured, upon most excellent authority, that these diseases, strange and elaborate affections of the nervous system, are found *exclusively* amongst the young men and women of the Quaker society; that they are known and understood exclusively amongst physicians who have practised in great towns having a large Quaker population, such as Birmingham; that they assume a new type, and a more inveterate character, in the second or third generation, to whom this fatal inheritance is often transmitted; and, finally, that, if this class of nervous derangements does not increase so much as to attract public attention, it is simply becanse the community itself — the Quaker body — does not increase, but, on the contrary, is rather on the wane.

From a progenitrix, then, no matter in what generation, C. L—— inherited that awful malady which withered his own happiness, root and branch, gathering strength from year to year. His father was a banker, and, I presume, wealthy, from the ample allowance which he always made to his son Charles. Charles, it is true, had the rights of primogeniture — which, however, in a commercial family, are not considerable — but, at the same time, though eldest, he was eldest of seventeen or eighteen brothers and sisters; and of these, I believe, that some round dozen or so were living at the time when I first came to know him. He had been educated in the bosom of Quaker society; his own parents, with most of their friends, were Quakers; and, even of his own generation, all the young women continued Quakers. Naturally, therefore, as a boy, he also was obliged to conform to the Quaker ritual. But this ritual presses with great inequality upon the two sexes;

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in so far, at least, as regards dress. The distinctions of dress which announce the female Quaker, are all in her favor. In a nation eminent for personal purity, and where it should seem beforehand impossible for any woman to create a pre-eminence for herself in that respect; so it is, however, that the female Quaker, by her dress, seems even purer than other women, and consecrated to a service of purity; earthly soil or taint, even the sullying breath of mortality, seems as if kept aloof from her person — forcibly held in repulsion by some protecting sanctity. This transcendent purity, and a nun-like gentleness, self-respect, and sequestration from the world — these are all that *her* peculiarity of dress expresses; and surely this 'all' is quite enough to win every man's favorable feelings towards her, and something even like homage. But, with the male Quaker, how different is the case! *His* dress — originally not remarkable by its shape, but solely by its color and want of ornament, so peculiar has it become in a lapse of nearly two centuries — seems expressly devised to point him out to ridicule. In some towns, it is true, such as Birmingham and Kendal, the public eye is so familiar with this costume, that in *them* it excites no feeling whatever more than the professional costume of butchers, bakers, grooms, &c. But in towns not commercial — towns of luxury and parade — a Quaker is exposed to most mortifying trials of his self-esteem. It has happened that I have followed a young man of this order for a quarter of a mile, in Bath, or in one of the fashionable streets of London, on a summer evening, when numerous servants were lounging on the steps of the front door, or at the area gates; and I have seen him run the gauntlet of grim smiles from the men, and *heard* him run the gauntlet of that sound — the worst which heaven has in its artillery of scorn against the peace of poor Man — the

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half-suppressed titter of the women. Laughing outright is bad, but still *that* may be construed into a determinate insult that studiously avows more contempt than is really felt; but tittering is hell itself; for it seems mere nature, and absolute truth, that extort this expression of contempt in spite of every effort to suppress it.

Some such expression it was that drove Charles L—— into an early apostacy from his sect: early it must have been, for he went at the usual age of eighteen to Cambridge, and there, as a Quaker, he could not have been received. He, indeed, of all men, was the least fitted to contend with the world's scorn, for he had no great fortitude of mind, his vocation was not to martyrdom, and he was cursed with the most exquisite sensibility. This sensibility, indeed, it was, and not so properly any determinate passion, which had been the scourge of his ancestress. There was something that appeared effeminate about it; and which, accordingly, used to provoke the ridicule of Wordsworth, whose character, in all its features, wore a masculine and Roman harshness. But, in fact, when you came to know Charles L——, there was, even in this slight tinge of effeminacy, something which conciliated your pity by the feeling that it impressed you with, of being part of his disease. His sensibility was eminently *Rousseauish* — that is, it was physico-moral; now pointing to appetites that would have mastered him had he been less intellectual, and governed by a less exalted standard of moral perceptions; now pointing to fine aerial speculations, subtle as a gossamer, and apparently calculated to lead him off into abstractions even too remote from flesh and blood.

During the Cambridge vacation, or, it might be, even before he went to Cambridge — and my reason for thinking so is, because both, I believe, belonged to the same

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town, if it could not be said of them as of Pyramus and Thisbe, that '*contiguas habuere domos*' — he fell desperately in love with Miss Sophia P——n. Who she was I never heard — that is, what were her connections; but, I presume, that she must have been of an opulent family, because Mrs. P——n, the mother of Mrs. L——, occasionally paid a visit to her daughter at the lakes; and that she brought with her a handsomely-appointed equipage, as to horses and servants. This I have reason to remember, from the fact of herself and her daughter frequently coming over on summer evenings to drink tea with me, and the affront (as I then thought it) which Wordsworth fastened upon me in connection with one of those visits. One evening, * * * * * *

A pang of wrath gathered at my heart. Yet why? One moment, I felt, indeed, that it was not gentlemanly to interfere with the privileges of any man standing in the situation which I then occupied, of host; but still I should not have regarded it, except from its connection with a case I recollected in a previous year. One fine summer day, we were walking together — Wordsworth, myself, and Southey. Southey had been making earnest inquiries about poor L——, just then in the crisis of some severe illness, and Wordsworth's answer had been partly lost to me. I put a question upon it, when, to my surprise, (my wrath internally, but also to my special amusement,) he replied that, in fact, what he had said was a matter of some delicacy, and not quite proper to be communicated except to *near friends of the family.* This to me! — O ye Gods! — to me, who knew, by many a hundred conversations, how disagreeable Wordsworth was, both to Charles L—— and to his wife; whilst, on the other hand — not by words only, but by deeds, and by the most delicate acts of confidential favor — I knew that Mr. Wil-

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son (Professor Wilson) and myself had been selected as friends in cases which were not so much as named to Wordsworth. The arrogance of Wordsworth was well illustrated in this case of the L——s.

But to resume L——'s history. Being so desperately in love with Miss P——n, and his parents being rich, why should he not have married her? *Why* I know not. But some great obstacles arose; and, I presume, on the side of Miss P——n's friends; for, actually, it became necessary to steal her away; and the person in whom L—— confided for this delicate service, was no other than Southey. A better choice he could not have made. Had the lady been Helen of Greece, Southey would not have had a thought but for the honor and interests of his confiding friend.

Having thus, by proxy, run away with his young wife, and married her, L—— brought her to Cambridge. It is a novel thing in Cambridge, though not altogether unprecedented, for a student to live there with a wife. This novelty L—— exhibited to the University for some time; but then, finding the situation not perfectly agreeable to the delicate sensibilities of his young wife, L—— removed, first, I think, to Penrith; and, after some changes, he settled down at Brathay, from which, so long as he stayed on English ground — that is, for about fifteen or sixteen years — he never moved. When I first crossed his path at the lakes, he was in the zenith of the brief happiness that was granted to him on earth. He stood in the very centre of earthly pleasures; and, that his advantages may be duly estimated, I will describe both himself and his situation.

First, then, as to his person, he was tall and somewhat clumsy — not intellectual so much as benign and conciliatory in his expression of face. His features were not

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striking, but they expressed great goodness of heart; and latterly wore a deprecatory expression that was peculiarly touching to those who knew its cause. His manners were free from all modes of vulgarity; and, where he acquired his knowledge I know not, (for I never heard him claim any connection with people of rank,) but a knowledge he certainly had of all the conventional usages amongst the higher circles, and of those purely arbitrary customs which mere good sense and native elegance of manner are not, of themselves, sufficient to teach. Some of these he might have learned from the family of the Bishop of Llandaff; for with the ladies of that family he was intimate, especially with the eldest daughter, who was an accomplished student in that very department of literature which L—— himself most cultivated, viz., all that class of works which deal in the analysis of human passions, or attempt to exhibit the development of human character, in relation to sexual attachments, when placed in trying circumstances. L—— corresponded with Miss Watson in French; the letters, on both sides, being full of spirit and originality; the subjects generally drawn from Rousseau's 'Heloise' or his 'Confessions,' from 'Corinne,' from 'Delphine,' or some other work of Madame de Stael. For such disquisitions L—— had a real and a powerful genius. It was really a delightful luxury to hear him giving free scope to his powers for investigating subtle combinations of character; for distinguishing all the shades and affinities of some presiding qualities, disentangling their intricacies, and balancing, antithetically, one combination of qualities against another. Take, for instance, any well-known character from the drama, and pique L——'s delicate perception of differences by affecting to think it identical with some other character of the same class — instantly, in his anxiety to mark out

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the features of dissimilitude, he would hurry into an impromptu analysis of each character separately, with an eloquence, with a keenness of distinction, and a felicity of phrase, which were perfectly admirable. This display of familiarity with life and human nature, in all its masqueradings, was sometimes truly splendid. But two things were remarkable in these displays. One was, that the splendor was quite hidden from himself, and unperceived amidst the effort of mind, and oftentimes severe struggles, in attempting to do himself justice, both as respected the thoughts and the difficult task of clothing them in adequate words; he was as free from vanity, or even from complacency in reviewing what he had effected, as it is possible for a human creature to be. He thought, indeed, slightly of his own powers; and, which was even a stronger barrier against vanity, his displays of this kind were always effective in proportion to his unhappiness; for unhappiness it was, and the restlessness of internal irritation, that chiefly drove him to exertions of his intellect; else, and when free from this sort of excitement, he tended to the quiescent state of a listener; for he thought everybody better than himself. The other point remarkable in these displays was, (and most unfavorable, of course, it proved to his obtaining the reputation they merited,) that he could succeed in them only before confidential friends, those on whom he could rely for harboring no shade of ridicule towards himself or his theme. Let but one person enter the room of whose sympathy he did not feel secure, and his powers forsook him as suddenly as the buoyancy of a bird that has received a mortal shot in its wing. Accordingly, it is a fact that neither Wordsworth nor Coleridge ever suspected the amount of power which was latent in L——; for he firmly believed that both of them despised him. Mrs. L—— thought the same thing. Often and

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often she has said to me, smiling in a mournful way — 'I know too well that both Wordsworth and Coleridge entertain a profound contempt for my poor Charles.' And, when I combated this notion, declaring that, although they might (and probably did) hold very cheap such writers as Rousseau and Madame de Stael, and, consequently, could not approve of studies directed so exclusively to their works, or to works of the same class, still that was not sufficient to warrant them in undervaluing the powers which Mr. L—— applied to such studies. To this, or similar arguments, she would reply by simply shaking her head, and then sink into silence.

But the time was fast approaching, when all pains of this kind, from supercilious or well founded disparagement, were to be swallowed up in more awful considerations and fears. The transition was not a long one, from the state of prosperity in which I found L—— about 1807–10, to the utter overthrow of his happiness, and, for his friends, the overthrow of all hopes on his behalf. In the three years I have assigned, his situation seemed luxuriously happy, as regarded the external elements of happiness. He had, without effort of his own, an income, most punctually remitted from his father, of from £1500 to £1800 per annum. This income was entirely resigned to the management of his prudent and excellent wife; and, as his own personal expenses, separate from those of his family, were absolutely none at all, except for books, she applied the whole, either to the education of her children, or to the accumulation of all such elegancies of life about their easy unpretending mansion, as might soothe her husband's nervous irritations, or might cheer his drooping spirits, with as much variety of pleasure as a mountainous seclusion allowed. The establishment of servants was usually limited to six — one only being a

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man servant—but these were well chosen: and one or two were confidential servants, tried by long experience. Rents are always low in the country for unfurnished houses; and even for the country, Low Brathay was a cheap house; but it contained everything for comfort, nothing at all for splendor. Consequently, a very large part of their income was disposable for purposes of hospitality; and, when I first knew them, Low Brathay was distinguished above every other house at the head of Windermere, or within ten miles of that neighborhood, by the judicious assortment of its dinner parties, and the gaiety of its *soirées dansantes.* These parties were never crowded; poor L—— rarely danced himself; but it gladdened his benevolent heart to see the young and blooming floating through the mazes of the dances then fashionable, whilst he sat by looking on, at times, with pleasure from his sympathy with the pleasure of others; at times pursuing some animated discussion with a literary friend; at times lapsing into profound reverie. At some of these dances it was that I first saw Wilson of Elleray, (Professor Wilson,) in circumstances of animation, and buoyant with youthful spirits, under the excitement of lights, wine, and, above all, of female company. He, by the way, was the best male dancer (not professional) I have ever seen; and this advantage he owed entirely to the extraordinary strength of his foot in all its parts, to its peculiarly happy conformation, and to the accuracy of his ear; for, as to instruction, I have often understood, from his family, that he never had any. Here also danced the future wife of Professor Wilson, Miss Jane P——, at that time the leading belle of the Lake country. But, perhaps, the most interesting person in those parties, from the peculiarity of her situation, was Mrs. L—— herself, still young, and, indeed, not apparently exceeding in years most of

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her unmarried visiters; still dancing and moving through cotillons, or country dances, as elegantly and as lightly as the youngest of the company; still framing her countenance to that expression of cheerfulness which hospitality required; but stealing for ever troubled glances to the sofa, or the recess, where her husband had reclined himself — dark foreboding looks, that saw but too truly the coming darkness which was soon to swallow up every vestige of this festal pleasure. She looked upon herself and her children too clearly as a doomed household; and such, in some sense, they were. And, doubtless, to poor L—— himself, it must a thousandfold have aggravated his sufferings — that he could trace, with a steady eye, the continual growth of that hideous malady which was stealing over the else untroubled azure of his life, and with inaudible foot was hastening onwards for ever to that night in which no man can work, and in which no man can hope.

It was so painful to Charles L——, naturally, to talk much about his bodily sufferings, and it would evidently have been so unfeeling in one who had no medical counsels to offer, if, for the mere gratification of his curiosity, he had asked for any circumstantial account of its nature or symptoms, that I am at this moment almost as much at a loss to understand what was the mode of suffering which it produced, how it operated, and through what organs, as any of my readers can be. All that I know is this: — For several years — six or seven, suppose — the disease expressed itself by intense anguish of irritation; not an irritation that gnawed at any one local spot, but diffused itself; sometimes causing a determination of blood to the head, then shaping itself into a general sense of plethoric congestion in the blood-vessels, then again remoulding itself into a restlessness that became insupportable;

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preying upon the spirits and the fortitude, and finding no permanent relief or periodic interval of rest, night or day. Sometimes L—— used robust exercise, riding on horseback as fast as he could urge the horse forward; sometimes, for many weeks together, he walked for twenty miles, or even more, at a time; sometimes (this was in the earlier stages of the case) he took large doses of ether; sometimes he used opium, and, I believe, in very large quantities; and I understood him to say that, for a time, it subdued the excess of irritability, and the agonizing accumulation of spasmodic strength which he felt for ever growing upon him, and, as it were, upon the very surface of his whole body. But all remedies availed him nothing; and once he said to me, when we were out upon the hills —'Ay, that landscape below, with its quiet cottage, looks lovely, I dare say, to you: as for me, I see it, but I feel it not at all; for, if I begin to think of the happiness, and its various modes which, no doubt, belong to the various occupants, according to their ages and hopes, then I *could* begin to feel it; but it would be a painful effort to me; and the worst of all would be, when *I had* felt it; for that would so sharpen the prospect before me, that just such happiness, which naturally ought to be mine, is soon on the point of slipping away from me for ever.'

Afterwards he told me that his situation internally was always this — it seemed to him as if on some distant road he heard a dull trampling sound, and that he knew it, by a misgiving, to be the sound of some man, or party of men, continually advancing slowly, continually threatening, or continually accusing him; that all the various artifices which he practised for cheating himself into comfort, or beguiling his sad forebodings, were, in fact, but like so many furious attempts, by drum and trumpets, or even by artillery, to drown the distant noise of his

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enemies; that, every now and then, mere curiosity, or rather breathless anxiety, caused him to hush the artificial din, and to put himself into the attitude of listening again; when, again and again, and so he was sure it would still be, he caught the sullen and accursed sound, trampling and voices of men, or whatever it were, still steadily advancing, though still, perhaps, at a great distance. It was too evident that derangement of the intellect, in some shape, was coming on; because slight and transient fits of aberration from his perfect mind, had already, at intervals, overtaken him; flying showers, from the skirts of the clouds, that precede and announce the main storm. This was the anguish of his situation, that, for years, he saw before him what was on the road to overwhelm his faculties and his happiness. Still his fortitude did not wholly forsake him, and, in fact, proved to be far greater than I or others had given him credit for possessing. Once only he burst suddenly into tears, on hearing the innocent voices of his own children laughing, and of one especially who was a favorite; and he told me that sometimes, when this little child took his hand and led him passively about the garden, he had a feeling that prompted him (however weak and foolish it seemed) to call upon this child for protection; and that it seemed to him as if he might still escape, could he but surround himself only with children. No doubt this feeling arose out of his sense that a confusion was stealing over his thoughts, and that men would soon find this out to be madness, and would deal with him accordingly; whereas children, as long as he did them no harm, would see no reason for shutting him up from his own fireside, and from the human face divine.

It would be too painful to pursue the unhappy case through all its stages. For a long time, the derangement of poor L——'s mind was but partial and fluctuating;

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and it was the opinion of Professor Wilson, from what he had observed, that it was possible to recall him to himself by firmly opposing his delusions. He certainly, on his own part, did whatever he could to wean his thoughts from gloomy contemplation, by preoccupying them with cheerful studies, and such as might call out his faculties. He translated the whole of Alfieri's dramas, and published his translation. He wrote and printed (but did not publish) a novel in two volumes; my copy of which he soon after begged back again so beseechingly, that I yielded; and so, I believe, did all his other friends: in which case no copy may now exist. All, however, availed him not; the crisis so long dreaded arrived. He was taken away to a lunatic asylum; and, for some long time, he was lost to me as to the rest of the world. The first memorial I had of him, was a gentleman, with his hair in disorder, rushing into my cottage at Grasmere, throwing his arms about my neck, and bursting into stormy weeping — it was poor L——!

Yes, it was indeed poor L——, a fugitive from a madhouse, and throwing himself for security upon the honor and affection of one whom with good reason, he supposed confidentially attached to him. Could there be a situation so full of interest or perplexity? Should any ill happen to himself, or to another, through his present enlargement — should he take any fit of vindictive malice against any person whom he might view as an accomplice in the plans against his own freedom, and probably many persons in the neighborhood, medical and non-medical, stood liable to such a suspicion — upon me, I felt, as the abettor of his evasion, would all the blame settle. And unfortunately we had, in the recent records of this very vale, a most awful lesson, and still fresh in everybody's remembrance, of the danger connected with this sort of criminal con-

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nivance, or passive participation in the purposes of maniacal malignity. A man, named Watson, had often and for years threatened to kill his aged and inoffensive mother. His threats, partly from their own monstrosity, and from the habit of hearing him for years repeating them without any serious attempt to give them effect — partly also from an unwillingness to aggravate the suffering of the poor lunatic, by translating him out of a mountaineer's liberty, into the gloomy confinement of an hospital — were treated with neglect; and at length, after years of disregarded menace, and direct forewarning to the parish authorities, he took an opportunity (which indeed was rarely wanting to him) of killing the poor gray-headed woman, by her own fireside. This case I had before my mind; and it was the more entitled to have weight with me when connected with the altered temper of L——, who now, for the first time in his life, had dropped his gentle and remarkably quiet demeanor, for a tone, savage and ferocious, towards more than one individual. This tone, however, lurked under a mask, and did not come forward, except by fits and starts, for the present. Indeed his whole manner wore the appearance of studied dissimulation, from the moment when he perceived that I was not alone. In the interval of years since I had last seen him, (which might have been in 1818,) my own marriage had taken place; accordingly, on turning round, and seeing a young woman seated at the tea-table, where heretofore he had been so sure of finding me alone, he seemed shocked at the depth of emotion which he had betrayed before a stranger, and anxious to reinstate himself in his own self-respect, by assuming a tone of carelessness and indifference. No person in the world could feel more profoundly on his account than the young stranger before him, who in fact

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was not a stranger to his situation and the excess of his misery. But this he could not know; and it was not, therefore, until we found ourselves alone, that he could be prevailed upon to speak of himself, or of the awful circumstances surrounding him, unless in terms of most unsuitable levity.

One thing I resolved, at any rate, to make the rule of my conduct towards this unhappy friend, viz., to deal frankly with him, and in no case to make myself a party to any plot upon his personal freedom. Retaken I knew he would be, but not through me; even a murderer in such a case, (*i. e.*, the case of having thrown himself upon my good faith,) I would not betray. I drew from him an account of the immediate facts in his late escape and his own acknowledgment that even now the pursuit must be close at hand; probably, that his recaptors were within a few hours' distance of Grasmere; that he would be easily traced. That my cottage furnished no means of concealment, he knew too well; still in these respects he was not worse off in Grasmere than elsewhere; and, at any rate, it might save him from immediate renewal of his agitation, and might procure for him one night of luxurious rest and relaxation, by means of conversation with a friend, if he would make up his mind to stay with us until his pursuers should appear; and them I could easily contrive to delay, for at least one day and night, by throwing false information in their way, such as would send them on to Keswick at least, if not to Whitehaven, through the collusion of the very few persons who could have seen him enter my door. My plan was simple and feasible: but somehow or other, and, I believe, chiefly because he did not find me alone, nothing I could say had any weight with him; nor would he be persuaded to stay longer than for a little tea. Staying so short a time, he found it difficult to account for having

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ever come. But it was too evidently useless to argue the point with him; for he was altered, and had become obstinate and intractable. I prepared, therefore, to gratify him according to his own plan, by bearing him company on the road to Ambleside, and (as he said) to Brathay. We set off on foot: the distance to Ambleside is about three and a half miles; and one-third of this distance brought us to an open plain on the margin of Rydalmere, where the road lies entirely open to the water. This lake is unusually shallow, by comparison with all its neighbors; but, at the point I speak of, it takes (especially when seen under any mode of imperfect light) the appearance of being gloomily deep: two islands of exquisite beauty, but strongly discriminated in character, and a sort of recess or bay in the opposite shore, across which the shadows of the hilly margin stretch with great breadth and solemnity of effect to the very centre of the lake, together with the very solitary character of the entire valley, on which (excluding the little hamlet in its very gorge or entrance) there is not more than one single house, combine to make the scene as impressive by night as any in the lake country. At this point it was that my poor friend paused to converse, and, as it seemed, to take his leave, with an air of peculiar sadness, as if he had foreseen (what in fact proved to be the truth) that we now saw each other for the final time. The spot seemed favorable to confidential talk; and here, therefore, he proceeded to make his last heart-rending communication: here he told me rapidly the tale of his sufferings, and, what oppressed his mind far more than those at this present moment, of the cruel indignities to which he had been under the necessity of submitting. In particular, he said that a man of great muscular power had instructions to knock him down whenever he made any allusion to certain speculative subjects, which the presiding

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authorities of the asylum chose to think connected with his unhappy disease. Many other brutalities, damnable and dishonoring to human nature, were practised in this asylum, not always by abuse of the powers lodged in the servants, but by direct authority from the governors; and yet it had been selected as the one most favorable to a liberal treatment of the patients; and, in reality, it continued to hold a very high reputation.

Great and monstrous are the abuses which have been detected in such institutions, and exposed by Parliamentary interference, as well as by the energy of individual philanthropists: but it occurs to one most forcibly, that, after all, the light of this Parliamentary torch must have been but feeble and partial, when it was possible for cases such as these to escape all general notice, and for the establishment which fostered them to retain a character as high as any in the land for enlightened humanity. Perhaps the paramount care in the treatment of lunatics should be directed toward those appliances, and that mode of discipline which is best fitted for restoring the patient finally to a sane condition; but the *second* place in the machinery of his proper management, should be reserved for that system of attentions, medical or non-medical, which have the best chance of making him happy for the present; and especially because his present happiness must always be one of the directest avenues to his restoration. In the present case, could it be imagined that the shame, agitation, and fury, which convulsed poor L——, as he went over the circumstances of his degradation, were calculated for any other than the worst effects upon the state and prospects of his malady? By sustaining the tumult of his brain, they must, almost of themselves, have precluded his restoration. At the side of that quiet lake he stood for nearly an hour, repeating his wrongs, his eyes glaring continually, as the

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light thrown off from those parts of the lake which reflected bright tracts of sky amongst the clouds fitfully illuminated them, and again and again threatening, with gestures the wildest, vengeance the most savage upon those vile keepers who had so abused any just purposes of authority. He would talk of little else; apparently he could not. A hollow effort he would make, now and then, when his story had apparently reached its close, to sustain the topic of ordinary conversation; but in a minute he had relapsed into the one subject which possessed him. In vain I pressed him to return with me to Grasmere. He was now, for a few hours to come, to be befriended by the darkness; and he resolved to improve the opportunity for some purpose of his own, which, as he showed no disposition to communicate any part of his future plans, I did not directly inquire into. In fact, part of his purpose, in stopping where he did, had been to let me know that he did not wish for company any further. We parted; and I saw him no more. He was soon recaptured; then transferred to some more eligible asylum; then liberated from all restraint; after which, with his family, he went to France; where again it became necessary to deprive him of liberty. And, finally, in France it was that his feverish existence found at length a natural rest, and an everlasting liberty; for there it was, in a *maison de santé*, at or near Versailles, that he died, (and I believe tranquilly,) a few years after he had left England. Death was indeed to him, in the words of that fine mystic, Blake the artist, 'a golden gate' — the gate of liberation from the captivity of half a life; or, as I once found the case beautifully expressed in a volume of poems, a century old, and otherwise poor enough, for they offered nothing worth recollecting beyond this single line, in speaking of the particular morning in which some young man had died —

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'That morning brought him peace and liberty.'

Charles L—— never returned to Brathay after he had once been removed from it; and the removal of his family soon followed. Mrs L——, indeed, returned at intervals from France to England, upon business connected with the interests of her family; and, during one of those fugitive visits, she came to the Lakes, where she selected Grasmere for her residence, so that I had opportunities of seeing her every day, for a space of several weeks. Otherwise, I never again saw any of the family, except one son, an interesting young man, who sought most meritoriously, by bursting asunder the heavy yoke of constitutional inactivity, to extract a balm for his own besetting melancholy, from a constant series of exertions in which he had forced himself to engage, for promoting education or religious knowledge amongst his poorer neighbors. But often and often, in years after all was gone, I have passed old Brathay, or have gone over purposely after dark, about the time when, for may a year, I used to go over to spend the evening; and, seating myself on a stone, by the side of the mountain river Brathay, have stayed for hours listening to the same sound to which so often C—— L—— and I used to hearken together with profound emotion and awe — the sound of pealing anthems, as if streaming from the open portals of some illimitable cathedral; for such a sound does actually arise, in many states of the weather, from the peculiar action of the river Brathay upon its rocky bed; and many times I have heard it, of a quiet night, when no stranger could have been persuaded to believe it other than the sound of choral chanting — distant, solemn, saintly. Its meaning and expression were, in those earlier years, uncertain and general; not more pointed or determined in the direction which it impressed upon one's feelings than the light of setting suns: and sweeping, in

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fact the whole harp of pensive sensibilities, rather than striking the chord of any one specific sentiment.

But since the ruin or dispersion of that household, after the smoke had ceased to ascend from their hearth, or the garden walks to re-echo their voices, oftentimes, when lying by the river side, I have listened to the same aerial saintly sound, whilst looking back to that night, long hidden in the frost of receding years, when Charles and Sophia L——, now lying in foreign graves, first dawned upon me, coming suddenly out of rain and darkness; then — young, rich, happy, full of hope, belted with young children, (of whom also most are long dead,) and standing apparently on the verge of a labyrinth of golden hours. Musing on that night in November, 1807, and then upon the wreck that had been wrought by a space of fifteen years, I would say to myself sometimes, and seem to hear it in the songs of this watery cathedral — Put not your trust in any fabric of happiness that has its root in man, or the children of men. Sometimes even I was tempted to discover, in the same music, a sound such as this — Love nothing, love nobody, for thereby comes a killing curse in the rear. But sometimes also, very early on a summer morning, when the dawn was barely beginning to break, all things locked in sleep, and only some uneasy murmur, or cock-crow, at a faint distance, giving a hint of resurrection for earth and her generations, I have heard, in that same chanting of the little mountain river, a more solemn if a less agitated admonition — a requiem over departed happiness, and a protestation against the thought that so many excellent creatures, but a little lower than the angels, whom I have seen only to love in this life — so many of the good, the brave, the beautiful, the wise — can have appeared for no higher purpose or prospect than simply to point a moral, to cause a little joy and many tears, a few perishing moons

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of happiness and years of vain regret, — No! that the destiny of man is more in correspondence with the grandeur of his endowments; and that our own mysterious tendencies are written hieroglyphically in the vicissitudes of day and night, of winter and summer, and throughout the great alphabet of Nature. But on that theme — Beware, reader! Listen to no *intellectual* argument. One argument there is, one only there is, of philosophic value: an argument drawn from the *moral* nature of man; an argument of Immanuel Kant's. The rest are dust and ashes.

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CHAPTER XIX.

SOCIETY OF THE LAKES.

Passing onwards from Brathay, a ride of about forty minutes carries you to the summit of a wild heathy tract, along which, even at noonday, few sounds are heard that indicate the presence of man, except now and then a woodman's axe, in some of the many coppice-woods scattered about that neighborhood. In Northern England there are no sheep-bells; which is an unfortunate defect, as regards the full impression of wild solitudes, whether amongst undulating heaths, or towering rocks: at any rate, it is so felt by those who, like myself, have been trained to its soothing effects, upon the hills of Somersetshire — the Cheddar, the Mendip, or the Quantock — or any other of those breezy downs, which once constituted such delightful local distinctions for four or five counties in that south-west angle of England. At all hours of day or night, this silvery tinkle was delightful; but, after sunset, in the solemn hour of gathering twilight, heard (as it always was) intermittingly, and at great varieties of distance, it formed the most impressive incident for the ear, and the most in harmony with the other circumstances of the scenery, that, perhaps, anywhere exists — not excepting even the natural sounds, the swelling and dying intonations of insects wheeling in their vesper flights. Silence and desolation are never felt so profoundly as

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when they are interrupted by solemn sounds, recurring by uncertain intervals, and from distant places. But in these Westmoreland heaths, and uninhabited ranges of hilly ground, too often nothing is heard, except, occasionally, the wild cry of a bird — the plover, the snipe, or perhaps the raven's croak. The general impression is, therefore, cheerless; and the more are you rejoiced when, looking down from some one of the eminences which you have been gradually ascending, you descry, at a great depth below,* the lovely lake of Coniston. The head of this lake is the part chiefly interesting, both from the sublime character of the mountain barriers, and from the intricacy of the little valleys at their base. On a little verdant knoll, near the north-eastern margin of the lake, stands a small villa, called Tent Lodge, built by Colonel Smith, and for many years occupied by his family. That daughter of Colonel Smith who drew the public attention so powerfully upon herself by the splendor of her attainments, had died some months before I came into the country. But yet, as I was subsequently acquainted with her family through the Loyds, (who were within an easy drive of Tent Lodge,) and as, moreover, with regard to Miss Elizabeth Smith herself, I came to know more than the world knew — drawing my knowledge from many of her friends, but especially from Mrs. Hannah More, who

* The approach from Ambleside or Hawkshead, though fine, is far less so than that from Grasmere, through the vale of Tilberthwaite, to which, for a *coup de theatre*, I recollect nothing equal. Taking the left-hand road, so as to make for Monk Coniston, and not for Church Coniston, you ascend a pretty steep hill, from which, at a certain point of the little gorge or *hawse*, (*i. e. hals*, neck or throat, viz., the dip in any hill through which the road is led,) the whole lake of six miles in length, and the beautiful foregrounds, all rush upon the eye with the effect of a pantomimic surprise — not by a graduated revelation, but by an instantaneous flash.

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had been intimately connected with her; for these reasons, I shall rehearse the leading points of her story; and the rather, because her family, who were equally interested in that story, long continued to form part of the Lake society.

On my first becoming acquainted with Miss Smith's pretensions, it is very true that I regarded them with but little concern; for nothing ever interests me less than great philological attainments, or at least that mode of philological learning which consists in mastery over languages. But one reason for this indifference is, that the apparent splendor is too often a false one. They who know a vast number of languages, rarely know any one with accuracy; and the more they gain in one way, the more they lose in another. With Miss Smith, however, I gradually came to know that this was not the case; or, at any rate, but partially the case; for, of some languages which she possessed, and those the least accessible, it appeared, finally, that she had even a critical knowledge. It created also a secondary interest in these difficult accomplishments of hers, to find that they were so very extensive. Secondly, That they were pretty nearly all of self-acquisition. Thirdly, That they were borne so meekly, and with unaffected absence of all ostentation. As to the first point, it appears (from Mrs. H. Bowdler's Letter to Dr. Mummsen, the friend of Klopstock) that she made herself mistress of the French, the Italian, the Spanish, the Latin, the German, the Greek, and the Hebrew languages. She had no inconsiderable knowledge of the Syriac, the Arabic, and the Persic. She was a good geometrician and algebraist. She was a very expert musician. She drew from nature, and had an accurate knowledge of perspective. Finally, she manifested an early talent for poetry; but, from pure modesty,

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destroyed most of what she had written, as soon as her acquaintance with the Hebrew models had elevated the standard of true poetry in her mind, so as to disgust her with what she now viewed as the tameness and inefficiency of her own performances. As to the second point — that for these attainments she was indebted, almost exclusively, to her own energy; this is placed beyond all doubt, by the fact, that the only governess she ever had (a young lady not much beyond her own age) did not herself possess, and therefore could not have communicated, any knowledge of languages, beyond a little French and Italian. Finally, as to the modesty with which she wore her distinctions, *that* is sufficiently established by every page of her printed works, and her letters. Greater diffidence, as respected herself, or less willingness to obtrude her knowledge upon strangers, or even upon those correspondents who would have wished her to make a little more display, cannot be imagined. And yet I repeat, that her knowledge was as sound and as profound as it was extensive. For, taking only one instance of this, her Translation of Job has been pronounced, by Biblical critics of the first rank, a work of real and intrinsic value, without any reference to the disadvantages of the translator, or without needing any allowances whatever. In particular, Dr. Magee, the celebrated writer on the Atonement, and subsequently a dignitary of the Irish Church — certainly one of the best qualified judges at that time — describes it as 'conveying more of the character and meaning of the Hebrew, with fewer departures from the idiom of the English, than any other translation whatever that we possess.' So much for the scholarship; whilst he rightly notices, in proof of the translator's taste and discretion, that 'from the received version she very seldom unnecessarily deviates:' thus refusing to disturb what was,

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generally speaking, so excellent and time-hallowed for any dazzling effects of novelty; and practising this forbearance as much as possible, notwithstanding novelty was, after all, the main attraction upon which the new translation must rest.

The example of her modesty, however, is not more instructive than that of her continued struggle with difficulties in pursuing knowledge, and with misfortunes in supporting a Christian fortitude. I shall briefly sketch her story: — She was born at Burnhall, in the county of Durham, at the latter end of the year 1776. Early in 1782, when she had just entered her sixth year, her parents removed into Suffolk, in order to be near a blind relation, who looked with anxiety to the conscientious attentions of Mrs. Smith, in superintending his comforts and interests. This occupation absorbed so much of her time, that she found it necessary to obtain the aid of a stranger in directing the studies of her daughter. An opportunity just then offered of attaining this object, concurrently with another not less interesting to herself, viz., that of offering an asylum to a young lady who had recently been thrown adrift upon the world by the misfortunes of her parents. They had very suddenly fallen from a station of distinguished prosperity; and the young lady herself, then barely sixteen, was treading that path of severe adversity, upon which, by a most singular parallelism of ill fortune, her young pupil was destined to follow her steps at exactly the same age. Being so prematurely called to the office of governess, this young lady was expected rather to act as an elder companion, and as a lightener of the fatigues attached to their common studies, than exactly as their directress. And, at all events, from her who was the only even nominal governess that Miss Smith ever had, it is certain that she could have learned

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little or nothing. This arrangement subsisted between two and three years, when the death of their blind kinsman allowed Mr. Smith's family to leave Suffolk, and resume their old domicile of Burnhall. But from this, by a sudden gleam of treacherous prosperity, they were summoned, in the following year, (June, 1785,) to the splendid inheritance of Piercefield — a show-place upon the river Wye; and, next after, Tintern Abbey and the river itself — an object of attraction to all who then visited the Wye.

A residence on the Wye, besides its own natural attraction, has this collateral advantage, that it brings Bath (not to mention Clifton and the Hot Wells) within a visiting distance for people who happen to have carriages; and Bath, it is hardly necessary to say, besides its stationary body of polished and intellectual residents, has also a floating casual population of eminent or interesting persons, gathered into this focus from every quarter of the empire. Amongst the literary connections which the Piercefield family had formed in Bath, was one with Mrs. Bowdler and her daughter — two ladies not distinguished by any very powerful talents, but sufficiently tinctured with literature and the love of literature to be liberal in their opinions. And, fortunately, (as it turned out for Miss Smith,) they were eminently religious: but not in a bigoted way; for they were conciliating and winning in the outward expression of their religious character; capable of explaining their own creed with intelligent consistency; and, finally, were the women to recommend any creed, by the sanctity and the benignity of their own lives. This strong religious bias of the two Bath ladies, operated in Miss Smith's favor by a triple service. First of all, it was this depth of religious feeling, and, consequently, of interest in the Scriptures, which had origin-

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ally moved the elder Mrs. Bowdler to study the Hebrew and the Greek, as the two languages in which they had been originally delivered. And this example it was of *female* triumph over their difficulties, together with the proof thus given that such attainments were entirely reconcilable with feminine gentleness, which first suggested to Miss Smith the project of her philological studies; and, doubtless, these studies, by the constant and agreeable occupation which they afforded, overspread the whole field of her life with pleasurable activity. 'From the above-mentioned visit,' says her mother, writing to Dr. Randolph, and referring to the visit which these Bath ladies had made to Piercefield — 'from the above-mentioned visit I date the turn of study which Elizabeth ever after pursued, and which I firmly believe the amiable conduct of our guests first led her to delight in.' Secondly, to the religious sympathies which connected these two ladies with Miss Smith, was owing the fervor of that friendship, which afterwards, in their adversity, the Piercefield family found more strenuously exerted in their behalf by the Bowdlers than by all the rest of their connections. And, finally, it was this piety and religious resignation, with which she had been herself inoculated by her Bath friends, that, throughout the calamitous era of her life, enabled Miss Elizabeth Smith to maintain her own cheerfulness unbroken, and greatly to support the failing fortitude of her mother.

This visit of her Bath friends to Piercefield — so memorable an event for the whole subsequent life of Miss Smith — occurred in the summer of 1789; consequently, when she was just twelve and a half years old. And the impressions then made upon her childish, but unusually thoughtful, mind, were kept up by continual communications, personal or written, through the years immediately

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succeeding. Just two and a half years after, in the very month when Miss Smith accomplished her fifteenth year, upon occasion of going through the rite of Confirmation, according to the discipline of the English Church, she received a letter of religious counsel — grave, affectionate, but yet humble — from the elder Mrs. Bowdler, which might almost have been thought to have proceeded from a writer who had looked behind the curtain of fate, and had seen the forge at whose fires the shafts of Heaven were even now being forged.

Just twelve months from the date of this letter, in the very month when Miss Elizabeth Smith completed her sixteenth year, the storm descended upon the house of Piercefield. The whole estate, a splendid one, was swept away, by the failure (as I have heard) of one banking-house; nor was there recovered, until some years after, any slender fragments of that estate. Piercefield was, of course, sold; but that was not the heaviest of her grievances to Miss Smith. She was now far advanced upon her studious career; for it should be mentioned, as a lesson to other young ladies of what may be accomplished by unassisted labor, that, between the ages of thirteen and twenty-one, all her principal acquisitions were made. No treasure, therefore, could, in her eyes, be of such priceless value as the Piercefield library; but this also followed the general wreck: not a volume, not a pamphlet, was reserved; for the family were proud in their integrity, and would receive no favors from the creditors. Under this scorching test, applied to the fidelity of friends, many, whom Mrs. Smith mentions in one of her letters under the name of 'summer friends,' fled from them by crowds: dinners, balls, soirees — credit, influence, support — these things were no longer to be had from Piercefield. But more annoying even

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than the fickle levity of such open deserters, was the timid and doubtful countenance, as I have heard Mrs. Smith say, which was still offered to them by some who did not relish, *for their own sakes*, being classed with those who had paid their homage only to the fine house and fine equipages of Piercefield. These persons continued, therefore, to send invitations to the family; but so frigidly, that every expression manifested but too forcibly how disagreeable was the duty with which they were complying; and how much more they submitted to it for their own reputation's sake, than for any kindness they felt to their old friends. Mrs. Smith was herself a very haughty woman, and it maddened her to be the object of condescensions so insolent and so reluctant.

Meantime, her daughter, young as she was, became the moral support of her whole family, and the fountain from which they all drew consolation and fortitude. She was confirmed in her religious tendencies by two circumstances of her recent experience: one was, that she, the sole person of her family who courted religious consolations, was also the sole person who had been able to maintain cheerfulness and uniform spirits: the other was, that although it could not be truly said of *all* their worldly friends that they had forsaken them, yet, of their religious friends it could be said, not one had done so; and at last, when for some time they had been so far reduced as not to have a roof over their heads, by one of these religious friends it was that they were furnished with every luxury as well as comfort of life; and, in a spirit of such sisterly kindness, as made the obligation not painful to the proudest amongst them.

It was in 1792 that the Piercefield family had been ruined; and in 1794, out of the wrecks which had been gathered together, Mr. Smith (the father of the family)

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bought a commission in the army. For some time the family continued to live in London, Bath, and other parts of England; but, at length, Mr. Smith's regiment was ordered to the west of Ireland; and the ladies of his family resolved to accompany him to head-quarters. In passing through Wales, (May, 1796,) they paid a visit to those sentimental anchorites of the last generation, whom so many of us must still remember — Miss Ponsonby, and Lady Eleanor Butler, (a sister of Lord Ormond,) whose hermitage stood near to Llangollen, and, therefore, close to the usual Irish route, by way of Holyhead. On landing in Ireland, they proceeded to a seat of Lord Kingston — a kind-hearted, hospitable Irishman, who was on the old Piercefield list of friends, and had never wavered in his attachment. Here they stayed three weeks. Miss Smith renewed, on this occasion, her friendship with Lady Isabella King, the daughter of Lord Kingston; and a little incident connected with this visit, gave her an opportunity afterwards of showing her delicate sense of the sacred character which attaches to gifts of friendship, and showing it by an ingenious device, that may be worth the notice of other young ladies in the same case. Lady Isabella had given to Miss Smith a beautiful horse, called Brunette. In process of time, when they had ceased to be in the neighborhood of any regimental stables, it became matter of necessity that Brunette should be parted with. To have given the animal away, had that been otherwise possible, might only have been delaying the sale for a short time. After some demur, therefore, Miss Smith adopted this plan: she sold Brunette, but applied the whole of the price, 120 guineas, to the purchase of a splendid harp. The harp was christened Brunette, and was religiously preserved to the end of her life. Now Brunette, after all, must have died in a few years; but,

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by translating her friend's gift into another form, she not only connected the image of her distant friend, and her sense of that friend's kindness, with a pleasure and a useful purpose of her own, but she conferred on that gift a perpetuity of existence.

At length came the day when the Smiths were to quit Kingston Lodge for the quarters of the regiment. And now came the first rude trial of Mrs. Smith's fortitude, as connected with points of mere decent comfort. Hitherto, floating amongst the luxurious habitations of opulent friends, she might have felt many privations as regarded splendor and direct personal power, but never as regarded the primary elements of comfort, warmth, cleanliness, convenient arrangements. But on this journey, which was performed by all the party on horseback, it rained incessantly. They reached their quarters drenched with wet, weary, hungry, forlorn. The quartermaster had neglected to give any directions for their suitable accommodation — no preparations whatever had been made for receiving them; and, from the luxuries of Lord Kingston's mansion, which habit had made so familiar to them all, the ladies found themselves suddenly transferred to a miserable Irish cabin — dirty, narrow, nearly quite unfurnished, and thoroughly disconsolate. Mrs. Smith's proud spirit fairly gave way, and she burst out into a fit of weeping. Upon this, her daughter, Elizabeth, [and Mrs. Smith herself it was that told the anecdote, and often she told it, or told others of the same character, at Loyd's,] in a gentle, soothing tone, began to suggest the many blessings which lay before them in life, and some even for this evening.

'Blessings, child!' — her mother impatiently interrupted her. 'What sort of blessings? Irish blessings! — county of Sligo blessings, I fancy. Or, perhaps, you call this a

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blessing?' holding up a miserable fragment of an iron rod, which had been left by way of poker, or rather as a substitute for the whole assortment of fire-irons. The daughter laughed; but she changed her wet dress expeditiously, assumed an apron; and so various were her accomplishments, that, in no long time, she had gathered together a very comfortable dinner for her parents, and, amongst other things, a currant tart, which she had herself made, in a tenement absolutely unfurnished of every kitchen utensil.

In the autumn of this year, (1796,) they returned to England; and, after various migrations through the next four years, amongst which was another and longer visit to Ireland, in 1800, they took up their abode in the sequestered vale of Patterdale. Here they had a cottage upon the banks of Ulleswater; the most gorgeous of the English lakes, from the rich and ancient woods which possess a great part of its western side; the sublimest, as respects its mountain accompaniments, except only, perhaps, Wastdale; and, I believe, the largest; for, though only nine miles in length, and, therefore, shorter by about two miles than Windermore, it averages a greater breadth. Here, at this time, was living Mr. Clarkson — that son of thunder, that Titan, who was in fact that one great Atlas that bore up the Slave-Trade abolition cause — now resting from his mighty labors and nerve-shattering perils. So much had *his* nerves been shattered by all that he had gone through in toil, in suffering, and in anxiety, that, for many years, I have heard it said, he found himself unable to walk up stairs without tremulous motions of his limbs. He was, perhaps, too iron a man, too much like the *Talus* of Spenser's 'Faerie Queene,' to appreciate so gentle a creature as Miss Elizabeth Smith. A more suitable friend, and one who thoroughly comprehended her, and

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expressed his admiration for her in verse, was Thomas Wilkinson of Yanwath, a Quaker, a man of taste, and of delicate sensibility. He wrote verses occasionally; and though feebly enough as respected poetic power, there were often such delicate touches of feeling, such gleams of real tenderness, in some redeeming part of each poem, that even Wordsworth admired and read them aloud with pleasure. Indeed Wordsworth has addressed to him one copy of verses, or rather to his spade, which was printed in the collection of 1807, and which Lord Jeffrey, after quoting one line, dismissed as too dull for repetition.

During this residence upon Ulleswater (winter of 1800) it was, that a very remarkable incident befell Miss Smith. I have heard it often mentioned, and sometimes with a slight variety of circumstances; but I here repeat it from an account drawn up by Miss Smith herself, who was most literally exact and faithful to the truth in all reports of her own personal experience. There is, on the western side of Ulleswater, a fine cataract, (or, in the language of the country, a *force*,) known by the name of Airey Force; and it is of importance enough, especially in rainy seasons, to attract numerous visiters from among 'the Lakers.' Thither, with some purpose of sketching, not the whole scene, but some picturesque features of it, Miss Smith had gone, quite unaccompanied. The road to it lies through Gobarrow Park; and it was usual, at that time, to take a guide from the family of the Duke of Norfolk's keeper, who lived in Lyulph's Tower — a solitary hunting lodge, built by his Grace for the purposes of an annual visit which he used to pay to his estates in that part of England. She, however, thinking herself sufficiently familiar with the localities, had declined to encumber her motions with such an attendant; consequently she was alone. For half an hour, or more, she continued to

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ascend: and, being a good 'cragswoman,' from the experience she had won in Wales as well as in northern England, she had reached an altitude much beyond what would generally be thought corresponding to the time. The path had vanished altogether; but she continued to pick out one for herself amongst the stones, sometimes receding from the *force*, sometimes approaching it, according to the openings allowed by the scattered masses of rock. Pressing forward in this hurried way, and never looking back, all at once she found herself in a little stony chamber, from which there was no egress possible in advance. She stopped and looked up. There was a frightful silence in the air. She felt a sudden palpitation at her heart, and a panic from she knew not what. Turning, however, hastily, she soon wound herself out of this aerial dungeon; but by steps so rapid and agitated, that, at length, on looking round, she found herself standing at the brink of a chasm, frightful to look down. That way, it was clear enough, all retreat was impossible; but, on turning round, retreat seemed in every direction alike even more impossible. Down the chasm, at least, she might have leaped, though with little or no chance of escaping with life; but on all other quarters it seemed to her eye that, at no price, could she effect an exit, since the rocks stood round her, in a semicircus, all lofty, all perpendicular, all glazed with trickling water, or smooth as polished porphyry. Yet how, then, had she reached the point? The same track, if she could hit that track, would surely secure her escape. Round and round she walked; gazed with almost despairing eyes; her breath came thicker and thicker; for path she could not trace by which it was possible for her to have entered. Finding herself grow more and more confused, and every instant nearer to sinking into some fainting fit or convulsion, she

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resolved to sit down and turn her thoughts quietly into some less exciting channel. This she did; gradually recovered some self-possession; and then suddenly a thought rose up to her, that she was in the hands of God, and that he would not forsake her. But immediately came a second and reproving thought — that this confidence in God's protection might have been justified had she been ascending the rocks upon any mission of duty; but what right could *she* have to any providential deliverance, who had been led thither in a spirit of levity and carelessness? I am here giving *her* view of the case; for, as to myself, I fear greatly, that if *her* steps were erring ones, it is but seldom indeed that *nous autres* can pretend to be treading upon right paths. Once again she rose! and, supporting herself upon a little sketching-stool that folded up into a stick, she looked upwards, in the hope that some shepherd might, by chance, be wandering in those aerial regions; but nothing could she see except the tall birches growing at the brink of the highest summits, and the clouds slowly sailing overhead. Suddenly, however, as she swept the whole circuit of her station with her alarmed eye, she saw clearly, about 200 yards beyond her own position, a lady, in a white muslin morning robe, such as were then universally worn by young ladies until dinner-time. The lady beckoned with a gesture and in a manner that, in a moment, gave her confidence to advance — *how* she could not guess, but in some way that baffled all power to retrace it, she found instantaneously the outlet which previously had escaped her. She continued to advance towards the lady, whom now, in the same moment, she found to be standing upon the other side of the *force*, and also to be her own sister. How or why that young lady, whom she had left at home earnestly occupied with her own studies, should have followed and overtaken her,

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filled her with perplexity. But this was no situation for putting questions; for the guiding sister began to descend, and, by a few simple gestures, just serving to indicate when Miss Elizabeth was to approach and when to leave the brink of the torrent, she gradually led her down to a platform of rock, from which the further descent was safe and conspicuous. There Miss Smith paused, in order to take breath from her panic, as well as to exchange greetings and questions with her sister. But sister there was none. All trace of her had vanished; and when, in two hours after, she reached her home, Miss Smith found her sister in the same situation and employment in which she had left her; and the whole family assured her that she had never stirred from the house.

In 1801, I believe it was that the family removed from Patterdale to Coniston. Certainly they were settled there in the spring of 1802; for, in the May of that spring, Miss Elizabeth Hamilton — a writer now very much forgotten, or remembered only by her 'Cottagers of Glenburnie,' but then a person of mark and authority in the literary circles of Edinburgh — paid a visit to the Lakes, and stayed there for many months, together with her married sister, Mrs. Blake; and both ladies cultivated the friendship of the Smiths. Miss Hamilton was captivated with the family; and, of the sisters in particular, she speaks as of persons that, 'in the days of paganism, would have been worshipped as beings of a superior order, so elegantly graceful do they appear, when, with easy motion, they guide their light boat over the waves.' And of Miss Elizabeth, separately, she says, on another occasion, — 'I never before saw so much of Miss Smith; and, in the three days she spent with us, the admiration which I had always felt for her extraordinary talents, and as extraordinary virtues, was hourly augumented. She is, indeed, a most

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charming creature; and, if one could inoculate her with a little of the Scotch frankness, I think she would be one of the most perfect of human beings.'

About four years had been delightfully passed in Coniston. In the summer of 1805, Miss Smith laid the foundation of her fatal illness in the following way, according to her own account of the case, to an old servant, a very short time before she died: — 'One very hot evening, in July, I took a book, and walked about two miles from home, when I seated myself on a stone beside the lake. Being much engaged by a poem I was reading, I did not perceive that the sun was gone down, and was succeeded by a very heavy dew, till, in a moment, I felt struck on the chest as if with a sharp knife. I returned home, but said nothing of the pain. The next day, being also very hot, and every one busy in the hay-field, I thought I would take a rake, and work very hard to produce perspiration, in the hope that it might remove the pain; but it did not.' From that time, a bad cough, with occasional loss of voice, gave reason to suspect some organic injury of the lungs. Late in the autumn of this year, (1805,) Miss Smith accompanied her mother and her two younger sisters to Bristol, Bath, and other places in the south, on visits to various friends. Her health went through various fluctuations until May of the following year, when she was advised to try Matlock. Here, after spending three weeks, she grew worse; and, as there was no place which she liked so well as the Lakes, it was resolved to turn homewards. About the beginning of June, she and her mother returned alone to Coniston: one of her sisters was now married; her three brothers were in the army or navy; and her father almost constantly with his regiment. Through the next two months she faded quietly away, sitting always in a tent,*

* And, in allusion to this circumstance, the house afterwards raised

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that had been pitched upon the lawn, and which remained open continually to receive the fanning of the intermitting airs upon the lake, as well as to admit the bold mountain scenery to the north. She lived nearly through the first week of August, dying on the morning of August 7; and the circumstances of her last night are thus recorded by her mother: —'At nine she went to bed. I resolved to quit her no more, and went to prepare for the night. Turpin [Miss Smith's maid] came to say that Elizabeth entreated I would not stay in her room. I replied — 'On that one subject I am resolved: no power on earth shall keep me from her; so, go to bed yourself.' Accordingly, I returned to her room; and, at ten, gave her the usual dose of laudanum. After a little time, she fell into a doze, and, I thought, slept till one. She was uneasy and restless, but never complained; and, on my wiping the cold sweat off her face, and bathing it with camphorated vinegar, which I did very often in the course of the night, she thanked me, smiled, and said — 'That is the greatest comfort I have.' She slept again for a short time; and, at half past four, asked for some chicken broth, which she took perfectly well. On being told the hour, she said, '*How long this night is!*' She continued very uneasy; and, in half an hour after, and on my inquiring if I could move the pillow, or do anything to relieve her, she replied, 'There is nothing for it but quiet.' At six she said, 'I must get up, and have some mint tea.' I then called for Turpin, and felt my angel's pulse: it was fluttering; and, by that I knew I should soon lose her. She took the tea well. Turpin began to put on her clothes, and was proceeding to dress her, when she laid her head upon the

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on a neighboring spot, at this time suggested by Miss Smith, received the name of Tent Lodge.

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faithful creature's shoulder, became convulsed in the face, spoke not, looked not, and in ten minutes expired.'

She was buried in Hawkshead churchyard, where a small tablet of white marble is raised to her memory, on which there is the scantiest record that, for a person so eminently accomplished, I have ever met with. After mentioning her birth and age, (twenty-nine,) it closes thus: — 'She possessed great talents, exalted virtues, and humble piety.' Anything so unsatisfactory or so commonplace I have rarely known. As much, or more, is often said of the most insipid people; whereas Miss Smith was really a most extraordinary person. I have conversed with Mrs. Hannah More often about her; and I never failed to draw forth some fresh anecdote illustrating the vast extent of her knowledge, the simplicity of her character, the gentleness of her manners, and her unaffected humility. She passed, it is true, almost inaudibly through life; and the stir which was made after her death soon subsided. But the reason was — that she wrote but little! Had it been possible for the world to measure her by her powers, rather than her performances, she would have been placed, perhaps, in the estimate of posterity, at the head of learned women; whilst her sweet and feminine character would have rescued her from all shadow and suspicion of that reproach which too often settles upon the learned character, when supported by female aspirants.

The family of Tent Lodge continued to reside at Coniston for many years; and they were connected with the Lake literary clan chiefly through the Loyds and those who visited the Loyds; for it is another and striking proof of the slight hold which Wordsworth, &c., had upon the public esteem in those days, that even Miss Smith, with all her excessive diffidence in judging of books and authors, never seems, by any one of her letters, to have

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felt the least interest about Wordsworth or Coleridge; nor did Miss Hamilton, with all her *esprit de corps* and acquired interest in everything at all bearing upon literature, ever mention them in those of her letters which belong to the period of her Lake visit in 1802; nor, for the six or seven months which she passed in that country, and within a short morning ride of Grasmere, did she ever think it worth her while to seek an introduction to any one of the resident authors.

Yet this could not be altogether from ignorance that such people existed; for Thomas Wilkinson, the intimate and admiring friend of Miss Smith, was also the friend of Wordsworth; and, for some reason that I never could fathom, he was a sort of pet with Wordsworth. Professor Wilson or myself were never honored with one line, one allusion, from his pen; but many a person, of particular feebleness, has received that honor. Amongst these I may rank Thomas Wilkinson; not that I wish to speak contemptuously of him: he was a Quaker, of elegant habits, rustic simplicity, and with tastes, as Wordsworth affirms, 'too pure to be refined.' His cottage was seated not far from the great castle of the Lowthers; and, either from mere whim — as sometimes such whims do possess great ladies — whims, I mean, for drawing about them odd-looking, old-world people, as *piquant* contrasts to the fine gentlemen of their own society, or because they did really feel a homely dignity in the plain-speaking 'Friend,' and liked, for a frolic, to be *thou'd* and *thee'd* — or some motive or other, at any rate, they introduced themselves to Mr. Wilkinson's cottage; and I believe that the connection was afterwards improved by the use they found for his services in forming walks through the woods of Lowther, and leading them in such a circuit as to take advantage of all the most picturesque stations. As a poet,

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I presume that Mr. Wilkinson could hardly have recommended himself to the notice of ladies who would naturally have modelled their tastes upon the favorites of the age. A poet, however, in a gentle, unassuming way, he was; and he, therefore, is to be added to the *corps litteraire* of the Lakes; and Yanwath to be put down as the advanced post of that *corps* to the north.

Two families there still remain, which I am tempted to gather into my group of Lake society — notwithstanding it is true that the two most interesting members of the first had died a little before the period at which my sketch commences; and the second, though highly intellectual in the person of that particular member whom I have chiefly to commemorate, was not, properly speaking, literary; and, moreover, belongs to a later period of my own Westmoreland experience — being, at the time of my settlement in Grasmere, a girl at a boarding-school. The first was the family of the Sympsons, whom Mr. Wordsworth has spoken of, with deep interest, more than once. The eldest son, a clergyman, and, like Wordsworth, an *alumnus* of Hawkshead school, wrote, amongst other poems, 'The Vision of Alfred.' Of these poems, Wordsworth says, that they 'are little known; but they contain passages of splendid description; and the versification of his '*Vision*' is harmonious and animated.' This is much for Wordsworth to say; and he does him even the honor of quoting the following illustrative simile from his description of the sylphs in motion, (which sylphs constitute the machinery of his poem;) and, probably, the reader will be of opinion that this passage justifies the praise of Wordsworth. It is founded, as he will see, on the splendid scenery of the heavens in Polar latitudes, as seen by reflection in polished ice at midnight.

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'Less varying hues beneath the Pole adorn
The streamy glories of the Boreal morn,
That, waving to and fro, their radiance shed
On Bothnia's gulf, with glassy ice o'erspread;
Where the lone native, as he homeward glides,
On polished sandals o'er the imprisoned tides,
Sees, at a glance, above him and below,
Two rival heavens with equal splendor glow;
Stars, moons, and meteors, ray oppose to ray;
And solemn midnight pours the blaze of day.'

'He was a man,' says Wordsworth, in conclusion, 'of ardent feeling; and his faculties of mind, particularly his memory, were extraordinary.' Brief notices of his life ought to find a place in the history of Westmoreland.

But it was the father of this Joseph Sympson who gave its chief interest to the family. Him Wordsworth has described, at the same time sketching his history, with a fulness and a circumstantiality beyond what he has conceded to any other of the real personages in 'The Excursion.' 'A priest he was by function;' but a priest of that class which is now annually growing nearer to extinction among us, not being supported by any sympathies in this age.

'His course,
From his youth up, and high as manhood's noon,
Had been irregular — I might say wild;
By books unsteadied, by his pastoral care
Too little check'd. An active, ardent mind;
A fancy pregnant with resource and scheme
To cheat the sadness of a rainy day;
Hands apt for all ingenious arts and games;
A generous spirit, and a body strong,
To cope with stoutest champions of the bowl —
Had earned for him sure welcome, and the rights
Of a priz'd visitant in the jolly hall
Of country squire, or at the statelier board

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> Of Duke or Earl — from scenes of courtly pomp
> Withdrawn, to while away the summer hours
> In condescension amongst rural guests.
> With these high comrades he had revelled long,
> By hopes of coming patronage beguiled,
> Till the heart sicken'd.'

Slowly, however, and indignantly his eyes opened fully to the windy treachery of all the promises held out to him; and, at length, for mere bread, he accepted, from an 'unthought-of patron,' a most 'secluded chapelry' in Cumberland. This was 'the little, lowly house of prayer' of Wythburn, elsewhere celebrated by Wordsworth; and, for its own sake, interesting to all travellers, both for its deep privacy, and for the excessive humility of its external pretensions, whether as to size or ornament. Were it not for its twin sister at Buttermere, it would be the very smallest place of worship in all England; and it looks even smaller than it is, from its position; for it stands at the base of the mighty Helvellyn, close to the high-road between Ambleside and Keswick, and within speaking distance of the upper lake — (for Wythburn water, though usually passed by the traveller under the impression of absolute unity in its waters, owing to the interposition of a rocky screen, is, in fact, composed of two separate lakes.) To this miniature and most secluded congregation of shepherds, did the once dazzling parson officiate as pastor; and it seems to amplify the impression already given of his versatility, that he became a diligent and most fatherly, though not peculiarly devout teacher and friend. The temper, however, of the northern Dalesmen, is not constitutionally turned to religion; consequently that part of his defects did him no especial injury, when compensated (as, in the judgment of these Dalesman, it *was* com-

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pensated) by ready and active kindness, charity the most diffusive, and patriarchal hospitality. The living, as I have said, was in Wythburn; but there was no parsonage, and no house in this poor dale which was disposable for that purpose. So Mr. Sympson crossed the marches of the sister counties, which to him was about equidistant from his chapel and his house, into Grasmere, on the Westmoreland side. There he occupied a cottage by the roadside; a situation which, doubtless, gratified at once his social and his hospitable propensities; and, at length, from age, as well as from paternal character and station, came to be regarded as the patriarch of the vale. Before I mention the afflictions which fell upon his latter end, and by way of picturesque contrast to his closing scene, let me have permission to cite Wordsworth's sketch, (taken from his own boyish remembrance of the case,) describing the first gipsy-like entrance of the brilliant parson and his household into Grasmere — so equally out of harmony with the decorums of his sacred character and the splendors of his past life: —

'Rough and forbidding were the choicest roads
By which our northern wilds could then be crossed;
And into most of these secluded vales
Was no access for wain, heavy or light.
So at his dwelling-place the priest arriv'd,
With store of household goods in panniers slung
On sturdy horses, graced with jingling bells;
And, on the back of more ignoble beast,
That, with like burthen of effects most priz'd
Or easiest carried, closed the motley train.
Young was I then, a schoolboy of eight years:
But still methinks I see them as they pass'd
In order — drawing toward their wish'd-for home.
Rock'd by the motion of a trusty ass,
Two ruddy children hung, a well-pois'd freight —
Each in his basket nodding drowsily.

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Their bonnets, I remember, wreath'd with flowers,
Which told it was the pleasant month of June.
And close behind the comely matron rode —
A woman of soft speech and gracious smile,
And with a lady's mien. — From far they came,
Even from Northumbrian hills: yet theirs had been
A merry journey, rich in pastime, cheer'd
By music, pranks, and laughter-stirring jest;
And freak put on, and arch word dropp'd — to swell
That cloud of fancy and uncouth surmise
Which gathered round the slowly moving train.
"Whence do they come? and with what errand charg'd?
Belong they to the fortune-telling tribe
Who pitch their tents under the greenwood tree?
Or strollers are they, fitted to enact
Fair Rosamond and the Children of the Wood?
When the next village hears the show announc'd
By blast of trumpet?" Plenteous was the growth
Of such conjectures — overheard, or seen
On many a staring countenance portray'd,
Of boor or burgher, as they march'd along.
And more than once their steadiness of face
Was put to proof, and exercise supplied
To their inventive humor, by stern looks,
And questions in authoritative tone,
By some staid guardian of the public peace,
Checking the sober horse on which he rode,
In his suspicious wisdom; oftener still
By notice indirect or blunt demand
From traveller halting in his own despite,
A simple curiosity to ease: —
Of which adventures, that beguil'd and cheer'd
Their grave migration, the good pair would tell
With undiminished glee in hoary age.'

Meantime the lady of the house embellished it with feminine skill; and the homely pastor — for such he had now become — not having any great weight of spiritual duties, busied himself in rural labors and rural sports.

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But was his mind, though bending submissively to his lot, changed in conformity to his task? No:

'For he still
Retained a flashing eye, a burning palm,
A stirring foot, a head which beat at nights
Upon its pillow with a thousand schemes.
Few likings had he dropp'd, few pleasures lost;
Generous and charitable, prompt to serve;
And still his harsher passions kept their hold —
Anger and indignation. Still he lov'd
The sound of titled names, and talked in glee
Of long past banquetings with high-born friends:
Then from those lulling fits of vain delight
Uprous'd by recollected injury, rail'd
At their false ways disdainfully and oft,
In bitterness and with a threatening eye
Of fire, incens'd beneath its hoary brow.
Those transports, with staid looks of pure good-will,
And with soft smile his consort would reprove.
She, far behind him in the race of years,
Yet keeping her first mildness, was advanced
Far nearer, in the habit of her soul,
To that still region whither all are bound.'

Such was the tenor of their lives; such the separate character of their manners and dispositions; and, with unusual quietness of course, both were sailing placidly to their final haven. Death had not visited their happy mansion through a space of forty years — 'sparing both old and young in that abode.' But calms so deep are ominous — immunities so profound are terrific. Suddenly the signal was given, and all lay desolate.

'Not twice had fall'n
On those high peaks the first autumnal snow,
Before the greedy visiting was closed,
And the long privileg'd house left empty; swept
As by a plague. Yet no rapacious plague

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Had been among them; all was gentle death,
One after one, with intervals of peace.'

The aged pastor's wife, his son, one of his daughters, and 'a little smiling grandson,' all had gone within a brief series of days. These composed the entire household in Grasmere, (the others having dispersed, or married away;) and all were gone but himself, by very many years the oldest of the whole: he still survived. And the whole valley, nay, all the valleys round about, speculated with a tender interest upon what course the desolate old man would take for his support.

'All gone, all vanished! he, deprived and bare,
How will he face the remnant of his life?
What will become of him? we said, and mus'd
In sad conjectures. — Shall we meet him now,
Haunting with rod and line the craggy brooks?
Or shall we overhear him, as we pass,
Striving to entertain the lonely hours
With music? [for he had not ceas'd to touch
The harp or viol, which himself had fram'd
For their sweet purposes, with perfect skill.]
What titles will he keep? Will he remain
Musician, gardener, builder, mechanist,
A planter, and a rearer from the seed?'

Yes; he persevered in all his pursuits: intermitted none of them. Weathered a winter in solitude; once more beheld the glories of a spring, and the resurrection of the flowers upon the graves of his beloved; held out even through the depths of summer into the cheerful season of haymaking, (a season much later in Westmoreland than in the south;) took his rank, as heretofore, amongst the haymakers; sat down at noon for a little rest to his aged limbs; and found even a deeper rest than he was expecting; for, in a moment of time, without

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a warning, without a struggle, and without a groan, he did indeed rest from his labors for ever. He,

'With his cheerful throng
Of open projects, and his inward hoard
Of unsunn'd griefs, too many and too keen,
Was overcome by unexpected sleep
In one blest moment. Like a shadow thrown,
Softly and lightly, from a passing cloud,
Death fell upon him, while reclined he lay
For noontide solace on the summer grass —
The warm lap of his mother earth; and so,
Their lenient term of separation pass'd,
That family — * * * *
By yet a higher privilege — once more
Were gathered to each other.'

Two surviving members of the family, a son and a daughter, I knew intimately. Both have been long dead: but the children of the daughter — grandsons, therefore, to the patriarch here recorded — are living prosperously, and do honor to the interesting family they represent.

The other family were, if less *generally* interesting by their characters or accomplishments, much more so by the circumstances of their position; and that member of the family with whom accident and neighborhood had brought me especially connected, was, in her intellectual capacity, probably superior to most of those whom I have had occasion to record. Had no misfortunes settled upon her life prematurely, and with the benefit of a little judicious guidance to her studies, I am of opinion that she would have been a most distinguished person. Her situation, when I came to know her, was one of touching interest. I will state the circumstances: — She was the sole and illegitimate daughter of a country gentleman; and was a favorite with her father, as she well deserved to be, in a degree so excessive — so nearly idolatrous —

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that I never heard illustrations of it mentioned but that secretly I trembled for the endurance of so perilous a love under the common accidents of life, and still more under the unusual difficulties and snares of her peculiar situation. Her father was, by birth, breeding, and property, a Leicestershire farmer; not, perhaps, what you would strictly call a gentleman, for he affected no refinements of manner, but rather courted the exterior of a bluff, careless yeoman. Still he was of that class whom all people, even then, on his letters, addressed as *esquire:* he had an ample income, and was surrounded with all the luxuries of modern life. In early life — and that was the sole palliation of his guilt — (and yet, again, in another view, aggravated it) — he had allowed himself to violate his own conscience in a way which, from the hour of his error, never ceased to pursue him with remorse, and which was, in fact, its own avenger. Mr. K—— was a favorite specimen of English yeomanly beauty: a fine athletic figure; and with features handsome, well moulded, frank, and generous in their expression, and in a striking degree manly. In fact, he might have sat for Robin Hood. It happened that a young lady of his own neighborhood, somewhere near Mount Soril I think, fell desperately in love with him. Oh! blindness of the human heart! how deeply did she come to rue the day when she first turned her thoughts to him! At first, however, her case seemed a hopeless one; for she herself was remarkably plain, and Mr. K—— was profoundly in love with the very handsome daughter of a neighboring farmer. One advantage, however, there was on the side of this plain girl: she was rich; and part of her wealth, or of her expectations, lay in landed property, that would effect a very tempting *arrondissement* of an estate belonging to Mr. K——. Through what course the affair

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travelled, I never heard more particularly, than that Mr. K—— was besieged and worried out of his steady mind by the solicitations of aunts and other relations, who had all adopted the cause of the heiress. But what finally availed to extort a reluctant consent from him was, the representation made by the young lady's family, and backed by medical men, that she was seriously in danger of dying, unless Mr. K—— would make her his wife. He was no coxcomb; but, when he heard all his own female relations calling him a murderer, and taxing him with having, at times, given some encouragement to the unhappy lovesick girl, in an evil hour he agreed to give up his own sweetheart and marry her. He did so. But no sooner was this fatal step taken than it was repented. His love returned in bitter excess for the girl whom he had forsaken, and with frantic remorse. This girl, at length, by the mere force of his grief, he actually persuaded to live with him as his wife; and when, in spite of all concealments, the fact began to transpire, and the angry wife, in order to break off the connection, obtained his consent to their quitting Leicestershire altogether, and transferring their whole establishment to the Lakes, Mr. K—— evaded the whole object of this manœuvre by secretly contriving to bring her rival also into Westmoreland. Her, however, he placed in another vale; and, for some years, it is pretty certain that Mrs. K—— never suspected the fact. Some said that it was her pride which would not allow her to seem conscious of so great an affront to herself; others, better skilled in deciphering the meaning of manners, steadfastly affirmed that she was in happy ignorance of an arrangement known to all the country beside.

Years passed on; and the situation of the poor wife became more and more gloomy. During those years, she

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brought her husband no children; on the other hand, her hated rivil *had:* Mr. K—— saw growing up about his table two children, a son, and then a daughter, who, in their childhood, must have been beautiful creatures; for the son, when I knew him in after life, though bloated and disfigured a good deal by intemperance, was still a very fine young man; more athletic even than his father; and presenting his father's handsome English yeoman's face, exalted by a Roman dignity in some of the features. The daughter was of the same cast of person; tall, and Roman also in the style of her face. In fact, the brother and the sister would have offered a fine impersonation of Coriolanus and Valeria. This Roman bias of the features a little affected the feminine loveliness of the daughter's appearance. But still, as the impression was not very decided, she would have been pronounced anywhere a very captivating young woman. These were the two crowns of Mr. K——'s felicity, that for seventeen or eighteen years made the very glory of his life. But Nemesis was on his steps; and one of these very children she framed the scourge which made the day of his death a happy deliverance, for which he had long hungered and thirsted. But I anticipate. About the time when I came to reside in Grasmere, some little affair of local business one night drew Wordsworth up to Mr. K——'s house. It was called, and with great propriety, from the multitude of holly trees that still survived from ancient days, *The Hollens;* which pretty local name Mrs. K——, in her general spirit of vulgar sentimentality, had changed to *Holly Grove.*

The place, spite of its slipshod novelish name, which might have led one to expect a corresponding style of tinsel finery, and a display of childish purposes, about its furniture or its arrangements, was really simple and

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unpretending; whilst its situation was, in itself, a sufficient ground of interest; for it stood on a little terrace, running, like an artificial gallery or corridor, along the final, and all but perpendicular, descent of the mighty Fairfield.* It seemed as if it must require iron bolts to pin it to the rock, which rose so high and, apparently, so close behind. Not until you reached the little esplanade upon which the modest mansion stood, were you aware of a little area interposed between the rear of the house and the rock, just sufficient for ordinary domestic offices. The house was otherwise interesting to myself, from recalling one in which I had passed part of my infancy. As in that, you entered by a rustic hall, fitted up so as to make a beautiful little breakfasting-room: the distribution of the passages was pretty nearly the same; and there were other resemblances. Mr. K—— received us with civility and hospitality — checked, however, and embarrassed, by a very evident reserve. The reason of this was, partly, that he distrusted the feelings, towards himself, of two scholars; but more, perhaps, that he had something beyond this general jealousy for distrusting Wordsworth. He had been a very extensive planter of larches, which were then recently introduced into the Lake country; and were, in

* '*Mighty Fairfield.*'

And Mighty Fairfield, with her chime
Of echoes, still was keeping time.

WORDSWORTH'S 'WAGGONER.'

I have retained the English name of Fairfield; but, when I was studying Danish, I stumbled upon the true meaning of the name, unlocked by that language; and reciprocally (as one amongst other instances which I met at the very threshold of my studies) unlocking the fact that Danish (or Icelandic rather) is the master-key to the local names and dialect of Westmoreland. *Faar* is a sheep: *fald* a hill. But are not all the hills sheep-hills? No; Fairfield only, amongst all its neighbors, has large, smooth, pastoral savannas, to which the sheep resort when all the rocky or barren neighbors are left desolate.

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every direction, displacing the native forest scenery, and dismally disfiguring this most lovely region; and this effect was *necessarily in its worst excess* during the infancy of the larch plantations; both because they took the formal arrangement of nursery grounds, until extensive thinnings, as well as storms, had begun to break this hideous stiffness in the lines and angles, and also because the larch is a mean tree, both in form and coloring, (having a bright gosling glare in spring, a wet blanket hue in autumn,) as long as it continues a young tree. Not until it has seen forty or fifty winters does it begin to toss its boughs about with a wild Alpine grace. Wordsworth, for many years, had systematically abused the larches and the larch planters; and there went about the country a pleasant anecdote, in connection with this well-known habit of his, which I have often heard repeated by the woodmen — viz., that, one day, when he believed himself to be quite alone — but was, in fact, surveyed coolly, during the whole process of his passions, by a reposing band of laborers in the shade, and at their noontide meal — Wordsworth, on finding a whole cluster of birch-trees grubbed up, and preparations making for the installation of larches in their place, was seen advancing to the spot with gathering wrath in his eyes; next he was heard pouring out an interrupted litany of comminations and maledictions; and, finally, as his eye rested upon the four or five larches which were already beginning to 'dress the line' of the new battalion, he seized his own hat in a transport of fury, and launched it against the odious intruders. Mr. K—— had, doubtless, heard, of Wordsworth's frankness upon this theme, and knew himself to be, as respected Grasmere, the sole offender.

In another way, also, he had earned a few random shots from Wordsworth's wrath — viz., as the erector of a huge

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unsightly barn, built solely for convenience, and so far violating all the modesty of rustic proportions, that it was really an eyesore in the valley. These considerations, and others beside, made him reserved; but he felt the silent appeal to his *lares* from the strangers' presence, and was even kind in his courtesies. Suddenly, Mrs. K—— entered the room — instantly his smile died away: he did not even mention her name. Wordsworth, however, she knew slightly; and to me she introduced herself. Mr. K—— seemed almost impatient when I rose and presented her with my chair. Anything that detained her in the room for a needless moment seemed to him a nuisance. She, on the other hand — what was *her* behavior? I had been told that she worshipped the very ground on which he trod; and so, indeed, it appeared. This adoring love might, under other circumstances, have been beautiful to contemplate; but here it impressed unmixed disgust. Imagine a woman of very homely features, and farther disfigured by a scorbutic eruption, fixing a tender gaze upon a burly man of forty, who showed, by every word, look, gesture, movement, that he disdained her. In fact, nothing could be more injudicious than her deportment towards him. Everybody must feel that a man who hates any person, hates that person the more for troubling him with expressions of love; or, at least, it adds to hatred the sting of disgust. That was the fixed language of Mr. K——'s manner, in relation to his wife. He was not a man to be pleased with foolish fondling endearments, from any woman, before strangers; but from her! Faugh! he said internally, at every instant. His very eyes he averted from her: not once did he look at her, though forced into the odious necessity of speaking to her several times; and, at length, when she seemed disposed to construe our presence as a sort of brief privilege to her own, he adopted that

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same artifice for ridding himself of her detested company, which has sometimes done seasonable service to a fine gentleman when called upon by ladies for the explanation of a Greek word — he hinted to her, pretty broadly, that the subject of our conversation was not altogether proper for female ears; very much to the astonishment of Wordsworth and myself

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CHAPTER XX.

SOCIETY OF THE LAKES.

It was at Mr. Wordsworth's house that I first became acquainted with Professor (then Mr.) Wilson of Elleray. I have elsewhere described the impression which he made upon me at my first acquaintance; and it is sufficiently known, from other accounts of Mr. Wilson, (as, for example, that written by Mr. Lockhart in 'Peter's Letters,') that he divided his time and the utmost sincerity of his love between literature and the stormiest pleasures of real life. Cock-fighting, wrestling, pugilistic contests, boat-racing, horse-racing, all enjoyed Mr. Wilson's patronage; all were occasionally honored by his personal participation. I mention this in no unfriendly spirit toward Professor Wilson; on the contrary, these propensities grew out of his ardent temperament and his constitutional endowments — his strength, speed, and agility: and being confined to the period of youth — for I am speaking of a period removed by five-and-twenty years — can do him no dishonor amongst the candid and the judicious. '*Non lusisse pudet, sed non incidere ludum.*' The truth was, that Professor Wilson had in him, at that period of life, something of the old English chivalric feeling which our old ballad poetry agrees in ascribing to Robin Hood. Several men of genius have expressed to me, at different times, the delight they had in the traditional character of Robin

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Hood: he has no resemblance to the old heroes of Continental romance in one important feature; they are uniformly victorious: and this gives even a tone of monotony to the Continental poems: for, let them involve their hero in what dangers they may, the reader still feels them to be as illusory as those which menace an enchanter — an Astolpho, for instance, who, by one blast of his horn, can dissipate an army of opponents. But Robin is frequently beaten: he never declines a challenge; sometimes he courts one; and occasionally he learns a lesson from some proud tinker or masterful beggar, the moral of which teaches him that there are better men in the world than himself. What follows? Is the brave man angry with his stout-hearted antagonist because he is no less brave and a little stronger than himself? Not at all: he insists on making him a present, on giving him a *dejeuner â la fourchette*, and (in case he is disposed to take service in the forest) finally adopts him into his band of archers. Much the same spirit governed, in his earlier years, Professor Wilson. And, though a man of prudence cannot altogether approve of his throwing himself into the convivial society of gipsies, tinkers, potters,* strolling players, &c.; nevertheless, it tells altogether in favor of Professor Wilson's generosity of mind, that he was ever ready to forego his advantages of station and birth, and to throw himself fearlessly upon his own native powers, as man opposed to man. Even at Oxford he fought an aspiring shoemaker repeatedly, which is creditable to both sides: for the very *prestige* of the gown is already overpowering to the artisan from the beginning, and he is half beaten by terror at his own presumption. Elsewhere he sought out, or, at least

* *Potter* is the local term in northern England for a hawker of earthen ware, many of which class lead a vagrant life, and encamp during the summer months like gipsies.

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did not avoid the most dreaded of the local heroes; and fought his way through his 'most verdant years,' taking or giving defiances to the right and the left in perfect carelessness, as chance or occasion offered. No man could well show more generosity in these struggles, nor more magnanimity in reporting their issue, which naturally went many times against him. But Mr. Wilson neither sought to disguise the issue nor showed himself at all displeased with it: even brutal ill-usage did not seem to have left any vindictive remembrance of itself. These features of his character, however, and these propensities which naturally belonged merely to the transitional state from boyhood to manhood, would have drawn little attention on their own account, had they not been relieved and emphatically contrasted by his passion for literature, and the fluent command which he soon showed over a rich and voluptuous poetic diction. In everything Mr. Wilson showed himself an Athenian. Athenians were all lovers of the cockpit; and, howsoever shocking to the sensibilities of modern refinement, we have no doubt that Plato was a frequent better at cock-fights; and Socrates is known to have bred cocks himself. If there were any Athenian, however, in particular, it was Alcibiades; for he had his marvellous versatility; and to the Windermere neighborhood in which he had settled, this versatility came recommended by something of the very same position in society — the same wealth, the same social temper, the same jovial hospitality. No person was better fitted to win or to maintain a high place in social esteem; for he could adapt himself to all companies; and the wish to conciliate and to win his way by flattering the self-love of others, was so predominant over all personal self-love and vanity,

> 'That *he* did in the general bosom reign
> Of young and old.'

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Mr. Wilson and most of his family I had already known for six years. We had projected journeys together through Spain and Greece, all of which had been nipped in the bud by Napoleon's furious and barbarous mode of making war. It was no joke, as it had been in past times, for an Englishman to be found wandering in continental regions; the pretence that he was, or might be, a spy — a charge so easy to make, so impossible to throw off — at once sufficed for the hanging of the unhappy traveller. In one of his Spanish bulletins, Napoleon even boasted * of having hanged sixteen Englishmen, 'merchants or others of that nation,' whom he taxed with no suspicion even of being suspected, beyond the simple fact of being detected in the act of breathing Spanish air. These atrocities had interrupted our continental schemes; and we were thus led the more to roam amongst home scenes. How it happened I know not — for we had wandered together often in England — but, by some accident, it was not until 1814 that we visited Edinburgh together. Then it was that I first saw Scotland.

I remember a singular incident which befel us on the road. Breakfasting together, before starting, at Mr. Wilson's place of Elleray, we had roamed, through a long and delightful day, by way of Ulleswater, &c. Reaching Penrith at night, we slept there; and in the morning, as we were sunning ourselves in the street, we saw, seated in an arm-chair, and dedicating himself to the self-same task of *apricating* his jolly personage, a rosy, jovial, portly man, having something of the air of a Quaker. Good nature was clearly his predominating quality; and, as that happened to be our foible also, we

* This brutal boast might, after all, be a falsehood; and, with respect to mere numbers, probably was so.

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soon fell into talk; and from that into reciprocations of good will; and from those into a direct proposal, on our new friend's part, that we should set out upon our travels together. How — whither — to what end or object — seemed as little to enter into his speculations as the cost of realizing them. Rare it is, in this business world of ours, to find any man in so absolute a state of indifference and neutrality, that for him all quarters of the globe, and all points of the compass, are self-balanced by philosophic equilibrium of choice. There seemed to us something amusing and yet monstrous in such a man; and, perhaps, had we been in the same condition of exquisite indetermination, to this hour we might all have been staying together at Penrith. We, however, were previously bound to Edinburgh; and, as soon as this was explained to him, that way he proposed to accompany us. We took a chaise, therefore, jointly, to Carlisle; and, during the whole eighteen miles, he astonished us by the wildest and most frantic displays of erudition, much of it levelled at Sir Isaac Newton. Much philosophical learning also he exhibited; but the grotesque accompaniment of the whole was, that, after every bravura, he fell back into his corner in fits of laughter at himself. We began to find out the unhappy solution of his indifference and purposeless condition; he was a lunatic; and, afterwards, we had reason to suppose that he was now a fugitive from his keepers. At Carlisle he became restless and suspicious; and, finally, upon some real or imaginary business, he turned aside to Whitehaven. We were not the objects of his jealousy; for he parted with us reluctantly and anxiously. On our part, we felt our pleasure overcast by sadness; for we had been much amused by his conversation, and could not but respect the philological learning which he had displayed. But one thing was whimsical

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enough: Wilson purposely said some startling things — startling in point of decorum, or gay pleasantries, *contra bonos mores;* at every sally of which, he looked as awfully shocked as though he himself had not been holding the most licentious talk in another key, licentious as respected all truth of history or of science. Another illustration, in fact, he furnished of what I have so often heard Coleridge say — that lunatics, in general, so far from being the brilliant persons they are thought, and having a preternatural brightness of fancy, usually are the very dullest and most uninspired of mortals. The sequel of our poor friend's history — for the apparent goodness of his nature had interested us both in his fortunes and caused us to inquire after him through all probable channels — was, that he was last seen by a Cambridge man of our acquaintance, but under circumstances which confirmed our worst fears: it was in a stage-coach; and, at first, the Cantab suspected nothing amiss; but some accident of conversation being started, the topic of La Place's *Mechanique Celeste*, off flew our jolly Penrith friend in a tirade against Sir Isaac Newton; so that at once we recognised him, as the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' his 'cosmogony friend' in prison; but — and that was melancholy to hear — this tirade was suddenly checked, in the rudest manner, by a brutal fellow in one corner of the carriage, who, as it now appeared, was attending him as a regular keeper; and, according to the custom of such people, always laid an interdict upon every ebullition of fancy or animated thought. He was a man whose mind had got some wheel entangled, or some spring overloaded, but else, was a learned and able person; and he was to be silent at the bidding of a low, brutal fellow, incapable of distinguishing between the gaieties of fancy and the wandering of the intellect. Sad fate! and sad inversion

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of the natural relations between the accomplished scholar and the rude, illiterate boor!

Of Edinburgh I thought to have spoken at length. But I pause, and retreat from the subject, when I remember that so many of those whom I loved and honored at that time — some, too, among the gayest of the gay — are now lying in their graves. Of Professor Wilson's sisters, the youngest, at that time a child almost, and standing at the very vestibule of womanhood, is alone living: she has had a romantic life; has twice traversed, with no attendance but her servants, the gloomy regions of the Caucasus; and once with a young child by her side. Her husband, Mr. M'Neill, is now the English envoy at the court of Teheran. On the rest, one of whom I honored and loved as a sister, the curtain has fallen; and here, in the present mood of my spirits, I also feel disposed to drop a curtain over my subsequent memoirs. Farewell hallowed recollections!

Thus, I have sketched the condition of the lake district, as to society of an intellectual order, at the time, (viz., the winter of 1808-9,) when I became a personal resident in that district; and, indeed, from this era, through a period of about twenty years in succession, I may describe my domicile as being amongst the lakes and mountains of Westmoreland. It is true, I often made excursions to London, Bath, and its neighborhood, or northwards to Edinburgh; and, perhaps, on an average, passed one-fourth part of each year at a distance from this district; but here only it was that henceforwards I had a house and small establishment. The house, for a very long course of years, was that same cottage in Grasmere, embowered in roses and jessamine, which I have already described as a spot hallowed to the admirers of Mr. Wordsworth, by his seven years' occupation of its pretty

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chambers and its rocky orchard: a little domain, which he has himself apostrophized as the 'lowest stair in that magnificent temple,' forming the north-eastern boundary of Grasmere. The little orchard is rightly called 'the lowest stair;' for within itself, all is ascending ground; hardly enough of flat area on which to pitch a pavilion, and even that scanty surface an inclined plane; whilst the rest of the valley, into which you step immediately from the garden gate, is, (according to the characteristic beauty of the northern English valleys, as first noticed by Mr. Wordsworth himself,) 'flat as the floor of a temple.'

In sketching the state of the literary society gathered or gathering about the English lakes, at the time of my settling amongst them, I have, of course, authorized the reader to suppose that I personally mixed freely amongst the whole; else I should have had neither the means for describing that society with truth, nor any motive for attempting it. Meantime, the direct object of my own residence at the lakes was the society of Mr. Wordsworth. And it will be a natural inference that, if I mingled on familiar or friendly terms with this society, *a fortiori* would Mr. Wordsworth do so, as belonging to the lake district by birth, and as having been, in some instances, my own introducer to members of this community. But it was not so: and never was a grosser blunder committed than by Lord Byron, when, in a letter to Mr. Hogg, (from which an extract is given in some volume of Mr. Lockhart's 'Life of Sir Walter Scott,') he speaks of Wordsworth, Southey, &c., in connection with Sir Walter, as all alike injured by mixing only with little adoring coteries, which each severally was supposed to have gathered about himself as a centre. Now, had this really been the case, I know not how the objects of such a

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partial or exclusive admiration could have been injured by it, in any sense with which the public were concerned. A writer may — and of that there are many instances — write the worse for meeting nobody of sympathy with himself; no admiration sufficient to convince him that he has written powerfully: that misfortune, when it occurs, may injure a writer, or may cause him to cease cultivating his genius. But no man was ever injured by the strong reflection of his own power in love and admiration; not as a writer, I mean: though it is very true, from the great variety of modes in which praise, or the indirect flattery of silent homage, acts upon different minds, that some men may be injured as social companions: vanity, and, still more, egotism — the habit of making self the central point of reference, in every treatment of every subject — may certainly be cherished by the idolatry of a private circle, continually ascending; but arrogance and gloomy anti-social pride are qualities much more likely to be favored by sympathy withheld, and the unjust denial of a man's pretensions. This, however, need not be discussed with any reference to Mr. Wordsworth; for he had no such admiring circle: no applauding coterie ever gathered about him. Wordsworth was not a man to be openly flattered: his pride repelled that kind of homage, or any homage that offered itself with the air of conferring honor; and repelled it in a tone of loftiness or arrogance that never failed to kindle the pride of the baffled flatterer. Nothing, in the way of applause, could give Wordsworth any pleasure, unless it were the spontaneous and half-unconscious utterance of delight in some passage — the implicit applause of love, half afraid to express itself; or else the deliberate praise of rational examination, study, and comparison, applied to his writings: these were the only modes of admiration which could recommend them-

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selves to Wordsworth. But had it been otherwise, there was another mistake in what Lord Byron said: — the neighboring people, in every degree, 'gentle and simple,' literary or half educated, who had heard of Wordsworth, agreed in despising him. Never had poet or prophet less honor in his own country. Of the gentry, very few knew anything about Wordsworth. Grasmere was a vale little visited at that time, except for an hour's admiration. The case is now altered; and partly by a new road, which, having pierced the valley by a line carried along the water's edge, at a most preposterous cost, and with a large arrear of debt for the next generation, saves the labor of surmounting a laborious hill. The case is now altered, no less for the intellect of the age; and Rydal Mount is now one of the most honored abodes in the island. But, at that time, Grasmere did not differ more from the Grasmere of to-day than Wordsworth from the Wordsworth of 1809–20. I repeat that he was little known, even as a resident in the country; and, as a poet, strange it would have been had the little town of Ambleside undertaken to judge for itself, and against a tribunal which had for a time subdued the very temper of the age. Lord Byron might have been sure that nowhere would the contempt for Mr. Wordsworth be rifer than exactly amongst those who had a local reason for curiosity about the man, and who, of course, adopting the tone of the presiding journals, adopted them with a personality of feeling unknown elsewhere.

Except, therefore, with the Loyds, or occasionally with Thomas Wilkinson the Quaker, or very rarely with Southey, Wordsworth had no intercourse at all beyond the limits of Grasmere: and in that valley I was myself, for some years, his sole visiting friend; as, on the other hand, my sole visiters, as regarded that vale, were himself and his family.

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Among that family, and standing fourth in the series of his children, was a little girl, whose life, short as it was, and whose death, obscure and little heard of as it was amongst all the rest of the world, connected themselves with the records of my own life by ties of passion so profound, by a grief so frantic, and so memorable through the injurious effects which it produced of a physical kind, that, had I left untouched every other chapter of my own experience, I should certainly have left behind some memorandum of this, as having a permanent interest in the psychological history of human nature. Luckily the facts are not without a parallel, and in well authenticated medical books; else I should have scrupled, (as what man does *not* scruple who values, above all things, the reputation for veracity?) to throw the whole stress of credibility on my own unattached narration. But all experienced physicians know well that cases similar to mine, though not common, occur at intervals in every large community.

When I first settled in Grasmere, Catherine Wordsworth was in her infancy; but, even at that age, noticed me more than any other person, excepting, of course, her mother. She had for an attendant a young girl, perhaps thirteen years old — Sarah, one of the orphan children left by the unfortunate couple, George and Sarah Green, whose tragical end in a snow-storm I have already narrated. This Sarah Green was as far removed in character as could be imagined from that elder sister who had won so much admiration in her childish days, by her premature display of energy and household virtues. She was lazy, luxurious, and sensual: one, in fact, of those nurses who, in their anxiety to gossip about young men, leave their infant or youthful charges to the protection of chance. It was, however, not in her out-of-door ram-

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blings, but at home, that the accident occurred which determined the fortunes of little Catherine. Mr. Coleridge was, at that time, a visiter to the Wordsworths at Allan Bank, that house in Grasmere to which Wordsworth had removed upon quitting his cottage. One day about noon, when, perhaps, he was coming down to breakfast, Mr. Coleridge passed Sarah Green, playing after her indolent fashion with the child; and between them lay a number of carrots. He warned the girl that raw carrots were an indigestible substance for the stomach of an infant. This warning was neglected: little Catherine ate — it was never known how many; and, in a short time, was seized with strong convulsions. I saw her in this state about two, P. M. No medical aid was to be had nearer than Ambleside; about six miles distant. However, all proper measures were taken; and, by sunset, she had so far recovered as to be pronounced out of danger. Her left side, however, left arm, and left leg, from that time forward, were in a disabled state: not what could be called paralyzed, but suffering a sort of atony or imperfect distribution of vital power. Catherine was not above three years old when she died; so that there could not have been much room for the expansion of her understanding, or the unfolding of her real character. But there was room enough in her short life, and too much, for love the most frantic to settle upon her. The whole vale of Grasmere is not large enough to allow of any great distances between house and house; and as it happened that little Kate Wordsworth returned my love, she in a manner lived with me at my solitary cottage; as often as I could entice her from home, walked with me, slept with me, and was my sole companion. That I was not singular in describing some witchery to the nature and manners of this innocent child, you may gather from the following

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most beautiful lines extracted from a sketch* towards her portraiture, drawn by her father, (with whom, however, she was noways a favorite):—

'And as a faggot sparkles on the hearth,
Not less if unattended and alone
Than when both young and old sit gather'd round,
And take delight in its activity;
Even so this happy creature of herself
Was all sufficient: Solitude to her
Was blithe society, who fill'd the air
With gladness and involuntary songs.
Light were her sallies as the tripping fawn's,
Forth startled from the form where she lay couch'd;
Unthought of, unexpected, as the stir
Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow flowers;
Or from before it chasing wantonly
The many-color'd images impress'd
Upon the bosom of a placid lake.

It was this radiant spirit of joyousness, making solitude for her blithe society, and filling from morning to night the air 'with gladness and involuntary songs,' this it was which so fascinated my heart, that I became blindly, doatingly, in a servile degree, devoted to this one affection.

* It is entitled 'Characteristics of a Child Three Years Old;' and is dated at the foot 1811, which must be an oversight, for she was not so old until the following year. I may as well add the first six lines, though I had a reason for beginning the extract where it does, in order to fix the attention upon the special circumstance which had so much fascinated myself, of her all-sufficiency to herself, and the way in which she 'filled the air with gladness and involuntary songs.' The other lines are these:

'Loving she is and tractable, though wild;
And Innocence hath privilege in her
To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes;
And feats of cunning; and the pretty round
Of trespasses, affected to provoke
Mock chastisement and partnership in play.'

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In the Spring of 1812, I went up to London; and, early in June, by a letter from Miss Wordsworth, her aunt, I learned the terrific news, (for such to me it was,) that she had died suddenly. She had gone to bed in good health about sunset on June 4; was found speechless a little before midnight; and died in the early dawn, just as the first gleams of morning began to appear above Seat Sandel and Fairfield, the mightiest of the Grasmere barriers, about an hour, perhaps, before sunrise. Never, perhaps, from the foundations of those mighty hills, was there so fierce a convulsion of grief as mastered my faculties on receiving that heart-shattering news. Over and above my excess of love for her, I had always viewed her as an impersonation of the dawn and the spirit of infancy; and this abstraction seated in her person, together with the visionary sort of connection, which, even in her parting hours, she assumed with the summer sun, by timing her immersion into the cloud of death with the rising and setting of that fountain of life — these combined impressions recoiled so violently into a contrast or polar antithesis to the image of death, that each exalted and brightened the other. I returned hastily to Grasmere; stretched myself every night, for more than two months running, upon her grave; in fact, often passed the night upon her grave; not (as may readily be supposed) in any parade of grief; on the contrary, in that quiet valley of simple shepherds, I was secure enough from observation until morning light began to return; but in mere intensity of sick, frantic yearning after neighborhood to the darling of my heart.

Many readers will have seen in Sir Walter Scott's 'Demonology,' and in Dr. Abercrombie's 'Inquiries concerning the Intellectual Powers,' some remarkable illustrations of the creative faculties awakened in the eye or other

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organs by peculiar states of passion; and it is worthy of a place amongst cases of that nature, that, in many solitary fields, at a considerable elevation above the level of the valleys — fields which, in the local dialect, are called 'intacks' — my eye was haunted at times, in broad noonday, (oftener, however, in the afternoon,) with a facility, but at times also with a necessity, for weaving, out of a few simple elements, a perfect picture of little Kate in the attitude and onward motion of walking. I resorted constantly to these 'intacks,' as places where I was little liable to disturbance; and usually I saw her at the opposite side of the field, which might sometimes be at a distance of a quarter of a mile, generally not so much. Always almost she carried a basket on her head; and usually the first hint upon which the figure arose commenced in wild plants, such as tall ferns, or the purple flowers of the foxglove; but, whatever might be the colors or the forms, uniformly the same little full-formed figure arose, uniformly dressed in the little blue bed-gown and black skirt of Wesmoreland, and uniformly with the air of advancing motion. Through part of June, July, and part of August, in fact throughout the summer, this frenzy of grief continued. It was reasonably to be expected that nature would avenge such senseless self-surrender to passion; for, in fact, so far from making an effort to resist it, I clung to it as a luxury, (which, in the midst of suffering, it really was in part.) All at once, on a day at the latter end of August, in one instant of time, I was seized with some nervous sensation that, for a moment, caused sickness. A glass of brandy removed the sickness; but I felt, to my horror, a sting, as it were, of some stationary torment left behind — a torment absolutely indescribable, but under which I felt assured that life could not be borne. It is useless and impossible to describe what followed:

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with no apparent illness discoverable to any medical eye — looking, indeed, better than usual for three months and upwards, I was under the possession of some internal nervous malady, that made each respiration which I drew an act of separate anguish. I travelled southwards immediately to Liverpool, to Birmingham, to Bristol, to Bath, for medical advice; and finally rested — in a gloomy state of despair, rather because I saw no use in further change, than that I looked for any change in this place more than others — at Clifton, near Bristol. Here it was, at length, in the course of November, that, in one hour, my malady began to leave me: it was not quite so abrupt, however, in its departure, as in its first development: a peculiar sensation arose from the knee downwards, about midnight: it went forwards through a space of about five hours, and then stopped, leaving me perfectly free from every trace of the awful malady which had possessed me; but so much debilitated as with difficulty to stand or walk. Going down, soon after this, to Ilfracombe, in Devonshire, where there were hot sea baths, I found it easy enough to restore my shattered strength. But the remarkable fact in this catastrophe of my illness is, that all grief for little Kate Wordsworth, nay, all remembrance of her, had, with my malady, vanished from my mind. The traces of her innocent features were utterly washed away from my heart: she might have been dead for a thousand years, so entirely abolished was the last lingering image of her face or figure. The little memorials of her, which her mother had given to me, as, in particular, a pair of her red morocco shoes, won not a sigh from me as I looked at them: even her little grassy grave, white with snow, when I returned to Grasmere in January, 1813, was looked at almost with indifference; except, indeed, as now become a memorial to me of that

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dire internal physical convulsion thence arising, by which I had been shaken and wrenched; and, in short, a case more entirely realizing the old Pagan superstition of a nympholepsy in the first place, and, secondly, of a Lethe or river of oblivion, and the possibility, by one draught from this potent stream, of applying an everlasting ablution to all the soils and stains of human anguish, I do not suppose the psychological history of man affords.

From the Lakes, as I have mentioned before, I went annually southwards — chiefly to Somersetshire or to London, and more rarely to Edinburgh. In my Somersetshire visits, I never failed to see Mrs. Hannah More. My own relative's house, in fact, standing within one mile of Barley Wood, I seldom suffered a week to pass without calling to pay my respects. There was a stronger motive to this than simply what arose from Mrs. H. More's company, or even from that of her sisters, (one or two of whom were more entertaining because more filled with animal spirits and less thoughtful than Mrs. Hannah;) for it rarely happened that one called within the privileged calling hours, which, with these rural ladies, ranged between twelve and four o'clock, but one met some person interesting by rank, station, political or literary eminence.

Here, accordingly, it was, that, during one of my last visits to Somersetshire, either in 1813 or 1814, I met Mrs. Siddons, whom I had often seen upon the stage, but never before in private society. She had come into this part of the country chiefly, I should imagine, with a view to the medical advice at the Bristol Hot Wells and Clifton; for it happened that one of her daughters — a fine interesting young woman — was suffering under pulmonary consumption — that scourge of the British youth; of which malady, I believe, she ultimately died. From the Hot Wells, Mrs. Siddons had been persuaded to honor with her

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company a certain Dr. Wh——, whose splendid villa of Mendip Lodge stood about two miles from Barley Wood. This villa, by the way, was a show place, in which a vast deal of money had been sunk, upon two follies equally unproductive of pleasure to the beholder and of anything approaching a pecuniary compensation to the owner. The villa, with its embellishments, was supposed to have cost at least sixty thousand pounds; of which one-half had been absorbed, partly by a contest with the natural obstacles of the situation, and partly by the frailest of all ornaments — vast china jars, vases, and other 'knicknackery' baubles, which held their very existence by so frail a tenure as the carefulness of a housemaid; and which, at all events, if they should survive the accidents of life, never are known to reproduce to the possessor one-tenth part of what they have cost. Out of doors there were terraces of a mile long, one rising above another, and carried, by mere artifice of mechanic skill, along the perpendicular face of a lofty rock. Had they, when finished, any particular beauty? Not at all. Considered as a pleasure ground, they formed a far less delightful landscape, and a far less alluring haunt to rambling steps, than most of the uncostly shrubberies which were seen below, in unpretending situations, and upon the ordinary level of the vale. What a record of human imbecility! For all his pains and his expense in forming this costly 'folly,' his reward was daily anxiety, and one solitary *bon mot* which he used to record of some man, who, on being asked by the Rev. Doctor what he thought of his place, replied, that 'He thought the Devil had tempted him up to an exceedingly high place.' No part of the grounds, nor the house itself, was at all the better because, originally, it had been, beyond measure, difficult to form it: so difficult that, according to Dr. Johnson's witty remark, on another

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occasion, there was good reason for wishing that it had been impossible. The owner, whom I knew, most certainly never enjoyed a happy day in this costly creation; which, after all, displayed but little taste, though a gorgeous array of finery. The show part of the house was itself a monument to the barrenness of invention in him who planned it; consisting, as it did, of one long suite of rooms in a straight line, without variety, without obvious parts, and therefore without symmetry or proportions. This long vista was so managed that, by means of folding doors, the whole could be seen at a glance, whilst its extent was magnified by a vast mirror at the further end. The Doctor was a querulous old man, enormously tall and enormously bilious; so that he had a spectral appearance when pacing through the false gaieties of his glittering villa. He was a man of letters, and had known Dr. Johnson, whom he admired prodigiously; and had himself been, in earlier days, the author of a poem now forgotten. He belonged, at one period, to the coterie of Miss Seward, Dr. Darwin, Day, Mr. Edgeworth, &c.; consequently he might have been an agreeable companion, having so much anecdote at his command: but his extreme biliousness made him irritable in a painful degree, and impatient of contradiction — impatient even of dissent in the most moderate shape. The latter stage of his life is worth recording, as a melancholy comment upon the blindness of human foresight, and in some degree also as a lesson on the disappointments which follow any departure from high principle, and the deception which seldom fails to lie in ambush for the deceiver. I had one day taken the liberty to ask him why, and with what ultimate purpose, he who did not like trouble and anxiety, had embarrassed himself with the planning and construction of a villa that manifestly embittered his days? 'That is, my young

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friend,' replied the doctor, 'speaking plainly, you mean to express your wonder that I, so old a man, (for he was then not far from seventy,) should spend my time in creating a show-box. Well now, I will tell you: precisely because I *am* old. I am naturally of a gloomy turn; and it has always struck me, that we English, who are constitutionally haunted by melancholy, are too apt to encourage it by the gloomy air of the mansions we inhabit. Your fortunate age, my friend, can dispense with such aids: ours require continual influxes of pleasure through the senses, in order to cheat the stealthy advances of old age, and to beguile us of our sadness. Gaiety, the *riant* style in everything, that is what we old men need. And I, who do not love the pains of creating, love the creation; and, in fact, require it as part of my artillery against time.'

Such was the amount of his explanation: and now, in a few words, for his subsequent history. Finding himself involved in difficulties by the expenses of this villa, going on concurrently with a large London establishment, he looked out for a good marriage, (being a widower,) as the sole means, within his reach, for clearing off his embarrassments, without proportionable curtailment of his expenses. It happened, unhappily for both parties, that he fell in with a widow lady, who was cruising about the world with precisely the same views, and in precisely the same difficulties. Each (or the friends of each) held out a false flag, magnifying their incomes respectively, and sinking the embarrassments. Mutually deceived, they married; and one change immediately introduced at the splendid villa was, the occupation of an entire wing by a lunatic brother of the lady's; the care of whom, with a large allowance, had been committed to her by the Court of Chancery. This, of itself, shed a

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gloom over the place which defeated the primary purpose of the doctor (as explained by himself) in erecting it. Windows barred, maniacal howls, gloomy attendants, from a lunatic hospital, ranging about: these were sad disturbances to the doctor's rose-leaf system of life. This, however, if it were a nuisance, brought along with it some *solatium*, as the lawyers express it, in the shape of the Chancery allowance. But next came the load of debts for which there was no *solatium*, and which turned out to be the only sort of possession with which the lady was well endowed. The disconsolate doctor — an old man, and a clergyman of the establishment — could not resort to such redress as a layman might have adopted: he was obliged to give up all his establishments; his gay villa was offered to Queen Caroline, who would, perhaps, have bought it, but that *her* final troubles in this world were also besetting her about that very time. For the present, therefore, the villa was shut up, and 'left alone with its glory.' The reverend and aged proprietor, now ten times more bilious and more querulous than ever, shipped himself off for France; and there, in one of the southern provinces — so far, therefore, as climate was concerned, realizing his vision of gaiety, but for all else in the most melancholy of exiles — sick of the world and of himself, hating to live, yet more intensely hating to die, in a short time the unhappy old man breathed his last, in a common lodging-house, gloomy and vulgar, and in all things the very antithesis to that splendid abode which he had planned for the consolation of his melancholy, and for the gay beguilement of old age.

At this gentleman's villa, Mrs. Siddons had been paying a visit; for the doctor was a worshipper, in a servile degree, of all things which flourished in the sunshine of the world's applause. To have been the

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idolized favorite of nations, to have been an honored and even a privileged * guest at Windsor, that was enough for him; and he did his utmost to do the honors of his neighborhood, not less to glorify himself in the eye of the country, who was fortunate enough to have such a guest, than to show his respect for the distinguished visiter. Mrs. Siddons felt herself flattered by the worthy doctor's splendid hospitalities; for that they were really splendid, may be judged by this fact, communicated to me by Hannah More, viz., that the Bishop of London, (Porteous,) when on a visit to Barley Wood, being much pressed by the doctor to visit him, had at length accepted a dinner invitation. Mrs. Hannah More was, of course, included in the invitation, but had found it impossible to attend, from ill health; and the next morning, at breakfast, the bishop had assured her, that, in all his London experience, in that city of magnificent dinners beyond all other cities of the earth, and amongst the princes of the land, he had never witnessed an entertainment so perfect in its appointments. Gratified as she was, however, by her host's homage, as expressed in his splendid style of entertaining, Mrs. Siddons was evidently more happy in her residence at Barley Wood. The style of conversation pleased her. It was religious: but Mrs. Siddons was herself religious; and at that moment, when waiting with anxiety upon a daughter whose languor seemed but too ominous in her maternal eyes, she was more than usually open to religious impressions, and predisposed to religious

* 'A *privileged* guest at Windsor.' Mrs. Siddons used to mention, that when she was invited to Windsor Castle, for the purpose of reading before the Queen and her royal daughters, on her first visit, she was ready to sink from weariness under the effort of standing for so long a time; but on some subsequent visit, I have understood that she was allowed to sit, probably on the suggestion of one of the younger ladies.

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topics. Certain I am, however, from what I then observed, that Mrs. Siddons, in common with many women of rank who were on the list of the Barley Wood visiters, did not apprehend, in their full sense and severity, the peculiar principles of Hannah More. This lady, excellent as she was, and incapable of practising any studied deceit, had, however, an instinct of worldly wisdom, which taught her to refrain from shocking ears polite with too harsh or too broad an exposure of all which she believed. This, at least, if it were any duty of hers, she considered, perhaps, as already fulfilled by her writings; and, moreover, the very tone of good breeding, which she had derived from the good company she had kept, made her feel the impropriety of lecturing her visiters even when she must have thought them in error. Mrs. Siddons obviously thought Hannah More a person who differed from the world chiefly by applying a greater energy, and sincerity, and zeal, to a system of religious truth equally known to all. Repentance, for instance — all people hold that to be a duty; and Mrs. Hannah More differed from them only by holding it to be a duty of all hours, a duty for youth not less than for age. But how much would she have been shocked to hear that Mrs. Hannah More held all repentance, however indispensable, yet in itself, and though followed by the sincerest efforts at reformation of life, to be utterly unavailing as any operative part of the means by which man gains acceptance with God. To rely upon repentance, or upon anything that man can do for himself, that Mrs. Hannah More considered as the mortal taint, as the πρωτον ψευδος in the worldly theories of the Christian scheme; and I have heard the two ladies — Mrs. More and Mrs. Siddons, I mean — talking by the hour together, as completely at cross purposes as it is possible to imagine. Everything, in

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fact, of what was special in the creed adopted by Mrs. Hannah More, by Wilberforce, and many others known as evangelical Christians, is always capable, in lax conversation, of being translated into a vague general sense, which completely obscures the true limitations of the meaning.

Mrs. Hannah More, however, was too polished a woman to allow of any sectarian movement being impressed upon the conversation; consequently, she soon directed it to literature, upon which Mrs. Siddons was very amusing, from her recollections of Dr. Johnson, whose fine-turned compliment to herself, (so much in the spirit of those unique compliments addressed to eminent people by Louis XIV.) had for ever planted the doctor's memory in her heart. She spoke also of Garrick and of Mrs. Garrick; but not, I think, with so much respect and affection as Mrs. Hannah More, who had, in her youthful days, received the most friendly attentions from both, though coming forward at that time in no higher character than as the author of Percy, the most insipid of tragedies. Mrs. Siddons was prevailed on to read passages from both Shakspeare and Milton. The dramatic readings were delightful; in fact, they were almost stage rehearsals, accompanied with appropriate gesticulation. One was the great somnambulist scene in Macbeth, which was the *ne plus ultra* in the whole range of Mrs. Siddon's scenical exhibitions, and can never be forgotten by any man who once had the happiness to witness that immortal performance of the divine artist. Another, given at the request of a Dutch lady, residing in the neighborhood of Barley Wood, was the scene from King John, of the Lady Constance, beginning — 'Gone to be married! gone to swear a peace!' &c. The last, and truly superb for the musical intonation of the cadences, was that inimitable

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apology or pleading of Christian charity for Cardinal Wolsey, addressed to his bitterest enemy, Queen Catherine. All these, in different degrees and different ways, were exquisite. But the readings from Milton were not to my taste. And, some weeks after, when, at Mrs. Hannah More's request, I had read to her some of Lord Byron's most popular works, I got her to acknowledge, in then speaking upon the subject of reading, that perhaps the style of Mrs. Siddons' reading had been too much determined to the dramatic cast of emphasis, and the pointed expression of character and situation which must always belong to a speaker bearing a part in a dialogue, to admit of her assuming the tone of a rapt poetic inspiration.

Meantime, whatever she did — whether it were in display of her own matchless talents, but always at the earnest request of the company or of her hostess — or whether it were in gentle acquiescent attention to the display made by others — or whether it were as one member of a general party, taking her part occasionally, for the amusement of the rest, and contributing to the general fund of social pleasure — nothing could exceed the amiable, kind, and unassuming deportment of Mrs. Siddons. She had retired from the stage,* and no longer regarded herself as a public character. But so much the stronger did she seem to think the claims of her friends upon anything she could do for their amusement.

Meantime, amongst the many pleasurable impressions

* I saw her, however, myself upon the stage twice after this meeting at Barley Wood: it was at Edinburgh; and the parts were those of Lady Macbeth and Lady Randolph. But she then performed only as an expression of kindness to her grandchildren. Professor Wilson and myself saw her on the occasion from the stage-box, with a delight embittered by the certainty that we saw her for the last time.

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which Mrs. Siddons' presence never failed to make, there was one which was positively painful and humiliating: it was the degradation which it inflicted upon other women. One day there was a large dinner party at Barley Wood — Mrs. Siddons was present; and I remarked to a gentleman who sat next to me — a remark which he heartily confirmed — that upon rising to let the ladies leave us, Mrs. Siddons, by the mere necessity of her regal deportment, figure, manner, air, without meaning it, absolutely dwarfed the whole party, and made them look ridiculous; though Mrs. H. More, and others of the ladies present, were otherwise really women of very pleasing appearance.

One final remark is forced upon me by my recollections of Mrs. Jordan, and of her most unhappy end; it is this; and strange enough it seems: — That the child of laughter and comic mirth, whose laugh itself thrilled the heart with pleasure, and who created gaiety of the noblest order for one entire generation of her countrymen, died prematurely, and in exile, and in affliction, which really killed her by its own stings. If ever woman died of a broken heart, of tenderness bereaved, and of hope deferred, that woman was Mrs. Jordan. On the other hand, this sad votary of Melpomene, the queen of the tragic stage, died, full of years and honors, in the bosom of her admiring country, in the centre of idolizing friends, and happy in all things except this, that some of those whom she most loved on earth had gone before her. Strange contrariety of lots for the two transcendent daughters of the comic and tragic muse. For my own part, I shall always regard my recollections of Mrs. Siddons as those in which chiefly I have an advantage over the coming generation; nay, perhaps, over all generations; for many centuries may revolve without producing such another transcendent creature.

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CHAPTER XXI.

WALKING STEWART. — EDWARD IRVING. — WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

In London, for a space of fifteen or twenty years, the most interesting by far of all my friends, and, singly, a sufficient magnet to draw me in that direction, sometimes when I had no other motive for such a journey, was the celebrated Peripatetic, John Stewart, commonly called 'Walking Stewart.' This man was indeed, in many respects, a more interesting person than any I have known, amongst those distinguished by accomplishments of the same kind. He was by birth a Scotsman: but it was little indeed that he owed to the land of his nativity; for he had been early turned adrift, and thrown altogether upon his own resources. At school, as he often told me with high glee, and even with something of gratified vanity in the avowal, no boy except himself was considered an invincible dunce, or what is sometimes called a Bergen-op-zoom; that is, a head impregnable to all teaching and all impressions that could be conveyed through books. Erudition, in fact, and classical or philological learning of every kind, he thoroughly despised; nor could he have been won by kindness even to take an interest in studies from which his mind naturally revolted; and thus, like many a boy before him, he obtained the reputation of a dunce, merely because his

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powers were never called into action or tried amongst tasks in which he took any genial delight. Yet this same scoffing-stock of the school, when summoned away to the tasks of life, dealing with subjects that interested his feelings, and moving in an element for which his natural powers had qualified him, displayed the energetic originality of genius. He went out to Bengal as a servant of the Company, in a civil capacity, and, for some time, was viewed both as an aspiring young man and as a young man of great promise: but, suddenly, some strong scruples of conscience seized him, with regard to the tenure of the Company's Indian empire, and to the mode in which it was administered. Simply upon the impulse of these scruples, doubtless ill-founded, he quitted the Company's service and entered that of a native prince — I think the Nawaub of Arcot: him he served in the office of secretary. And, finally, quitting this service also, chiefly, I conjecture, because the instinct of migration and of rambling was strong upon him, he commenced that long course of pedestrian travelling which thenceforwards occupied the active years of his life: in fact, from perhaps the age of twenty-three to fifty-eight or sixty. A navigator who has accomplished the *periplus* (*πεϱιπλους*) of the globe, we call a *circumnavigator;* and, by parity of reason, we might call a man in the circumstances of Mr. Stewart, viz., one who has walked round the *terra firma* of the globe, from Kamtschatka to Paraguay, and from Paraguay to Lapland, a *circumperipatetic*, (or, if the reader objects to this sort of tautology in the *circum* and the *peri*, a *circumnambulator.*) A terrestrial globe, representing the infinite wanderings of Mr. Stewart, would have seemed belted and zoned in all latitudes, like a Ptolemaic globe of the heavens, with cycles and epicycles, approaching, crossing, traversing,

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coinciding, receding. No region, pervious to human feet, except, I think, China and Japan, but had been visited by Mr. Stewart in this philosophic style; a style which compels a man to move slowly through a country, and to fall in continually with the natives of that country in a degree far beyond what is possible for the traveller in carriages and palanquins,* or mounted on horses, mules, or camels.

It may be presumed of any man who has travelled so extensively, and has thrown himself so fearlessly, for five or eight and thirty years, amongst men of all nations and in all degrees of civilization, that he must often have found himself in situations of great and sudden danger. In fact, Walking Stewart, like the famous Ledyard, used to look back upon the hardships, the sufferings, and the risks he had undergone, as too romantic for rehearsal. People would imagine, as he thought, that he was using the traveller's immemorial privilege of embellishing; and, accordingly, as one foremost feature in the character of John Stewart, was his noble reverence for truth, so that, to have won a universal interest with the public, he would not have deviated, by one hair's breadth, from the severe facts of a case; for that reason it was rare that he would be persuaded to relate any part of his adventures which approached the marvellous. Being so sincerely and profoundly veracious, he was jealous even of being suspected to be otherwise, though it were in a trifling question, or by a shadow of exaggeration. Yet, unwilling as he was to report his own adventurous hazards, or the escapes which, doubtless, he often owed to his own

* Dawk-travelling in a palanquin has been so much improved of late throughout India, that ninety miles a day may be accomplished in favorable weather; and, if the bearers are laid carefully, one hundred. With this velocity, and this seclusion, little can be seen.

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address, courage, or presence of mind, one general remark I have often heard him make, and with great energy; a remark abstracted from all his dangers collectively, though he would not refer to them separately and individually: it is a remark which ought to be put on record for the honor of human nature; and it should be viewed in the light of a testimony given by a witness, whose opportunities for collecting a fair evidence must far have exceeded those of all other men, making no exception in favor of any nation or any century. His remark was this — that, although in barbarous countries, with no police or organized provisions whatsoever, for the protection of human life and property, many violent and licentious aggressions would, doubtless, be committed, under circumstances of temptation or of provocation, upon the weak or defenceless stranger; yet that, in the whole course of his experience, he had never known one case where the rudest savage of the wildest tribes had violated an *understood* trust reposed in his forbearance. It was generally supposed, he said, that the civilized traveller amongst savages might lay his account with meeting unprovoked violence, except in so far as he carried arms for his protection. Now, he had found it by much the safer plan to carry no arms. That he had never found, and did not believe that in travels ten times more extensive he ever should have found, a human being so base as to refuse (provided he could be made *clearly to understand*) the appeal made to his generosity by a fellow-being, in boldly throwing himself upon his justice or hospitality; and if a different creed prevailed often amongst nautical people, it was owing (he contended) to the extreme levity and thoughtlessness of sailors. Indeed, the records of voyages, and, very recently, the records of our new settlements in Australia

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teem with instances where feuds, through a whole generation, (wanton and causeless as they may seem to many of those who merely *inherit* the consequences,) have been originally provoked by a cruel or cowardly salutation from fire-arms to a party of natives, advancing, perhaps, in a tumultuous manner, alarming to the timid or the inexperienced, but with intentions perfectly pacific.

Walking Stewart was, in conversation, the most eloquent man — limiting the meaning to the eloquence of nature, unsustained by any range of illustration from books — that I have ever known. Nor was I singular in this opinion; for Mr. Wordsworth, the poet, said something to the same effect, in speaking of the political harangues which he was in the habit of making about the time of the French Revolution. And little as he occupied himself with books as a reader, by a strange inversion of the ordinary human relations to literature, he — this rare and slight reader — was largely connected with books as an author. Apparently, he read little or nothing but what he wrote himself; books treating of man, his nature, his expectations, and his duties, in a desultory style; mingling much profound philosophy with many absurd or whimsical theories of physiology, or equally chimerical hypotheses of health and the modes of preserving it. Animal food or wine he never allowed himself to use; or, in fact, anything but the Brahminical diet of milk, fruit, and bread. It is saying little in favor of his system, to mention that he, in his own person, enjoyed a cloudless health; for so he would have done under any diet, with the same quantity of bodily exercise, and enjoying the same original hardiness of constitution and athletic frame of body. Latterly, his sole pleasure was music; and it grieved me to find, therefore, towards the close of his life, that he was growing exceedingly

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deaf: but this defect of hearing he remedied partially by purchasing an organ of considerable size and power.

Walking Stewart had purchased, in his younger days, an annuity, which, in fact, for many years, constituted his sole dependence. The tables of mortality were very imperfect at that time, and the Insurance Offices made many losing contracts; amongst which was Mr. Stewart's. He had long been viewed by the office as one of their bad bargains; and he had a playful malice in presenting himself annually to establish his continued existence. The office was always in a roar of laughter when he made his entry: for the Directors protested that he had already lived too long by twenty years for their interest; and he, on his part, ascribing his robust health to his peculiar diet, threatened them with living at least twenty years longer. He did, certainly, wear all the promise of doing so; for his eye was as brilliant and his cheek as fresh as those of men forty years younger. But he did not quite redeem the pledges of his appearance. A few years before his death, he gained an important suit against the East India Company. How that should have hastened his death, I cannot conjecture; for so thoroughly had his simple diet become necessary to his comfort, and a matter of cordial preference, that no entreaties of a friend would persuade him to take a glass of wine or spirits. A man more temperate never existed, nor a man in all respects of more philosophic habits, or more entire independence. I and others, who would not have insulted him with the offer of money, yet, knowing at one time the extreme slenderness of his resources, attempted to send him books and a few other luxuries, by way of relieving the weariness (as we feared) of his long solitary evenings in the heart of tumultuous London. But, though taking our attentions kindly, he uniformly repelled

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them; nor ever, in one instance, would accept of anything that might bring his perfect independence into question. He died when I was absent from London; and I could never learn the circumstances: for he had, I believe, no relatives; and his opulence, during the latter years of his life, would be likely to throw him into the hands of strangers. His books are filled with extravagances on all subjects; and, to religious people, they are especially revolting, by the uniform spirit of contempt which he manifests for all creeds alike — Christian, Mahometan, Buddhist, Pagan. In fact, he was as deliberate and resolute an Atheist as can ever have existed: but, for all that, and although wishing, for his own sake, that he had been a more religious man, or at least had felt a greater reverence for such subjects, and a closer sympathy with that which, for so vast a majority of the human race, must ever constitute their sole consolation under sorrow and calamity; still I could not close my eyes to the many evidences which his writings and his conversation afforded of a true grandeur of mind, and of a calm Spinosistic state of contemplative reverie. In fact, he was half crazy. But his mind, like a shell taken from the sea, still echoed and murmured to the multitudinous sounds and forms amongst which his former years had been passed. The many nations amongst whom he had walked, 'passing like night' (as the Ancient Mariner describes himself) 'from land to land,' — the black men, and the white men, and the 'dusk-faces with white silken turbands wreathed,' — were present for ever, and haunted his inner eye with imagery of the noblest kind, and with moving pageantries, in the midst of silence and years of deafness. He was himself a fine specimen of the animal Man. And, in some directions, he was fine also intellectually. His

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books, which are past counting, ought to be searched, and a bead-roll of fine thoughts, or eloquent expressions of old ones, separated from the eccentric speculations with which they too often lie interwoven. These books contain, moreover, some very wise practical suggestions, particularly as to the mode of warfare adapted to the British nation. And for knowledge of national character he was absolutely unrivalled. Some time or other, I may myself draw up a memoir of his life, and raise a tribute to his memory by a series of extracts such as I have suggested.

Another eminent man of our times, whom I came to know in my later visits to London, was the Rev. Edward Irving; and, in some respects, he is naturally recalled by the remembrance of Walking Stewart; for, like him, he had a fervid nature, a most energetic will, and aspirations after something greater than he could find in life. Like him, also, he owed not very much to education or study. Mr. Irving, unfortunately for his own reputation, sinned so enormously against prudence, and indeed against all sanity of mind during the latter part of his career; his writings and his actions were so equally indicative of an unsettled intellect; that, with most people, this sad revolution in his nature has availed to extinguish the recollection of that unequalled splendor of appearance with which he convulsed all London at his first *debût*. He was, unquestionably, by many, many degrees, the greatest orator of our times. Of him, indeed, more than of any man whom I have seen throughout my whole experience, it might be said, with truth and with emphasis, that he was a Boanerges, a son of thunder; and, in a sense, even awful and unhappy for himself, it might be affirmed that he had a demon within himself. Doubt there can now be none that he was insane, or partially so,

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from the very first. Not many weeks after his first burst upon the metropolis, I had the pleasure of meeting him at a dinner party. He was in exuberant spirits; and he strode about the drawing-room, before dinner, with the air of one who looked upon himself as clothed with the functions of Jonah sent to Nineveh, or of Paul upon a celestial mission to the Gentiles. He talked a good deal of phrenology, and in the tone of one who had entirely adopted its great leading doctrines. My head, with a very slight apology for doing so, he examined: his report, being somewhat flattering, I shall not repeat, further than that 'conscientiousness' was found in great strength, and 'veneration,' which were the chief *moral* indications that he detected. We walked homewards together; and, as it happened that our roads coincided for three miles or more, we had a good deal of conversation. In one thing he thoroughly agreed with me, viz., in disliking common literary society, by comparison with that of people less pretending, left more to the impulses of their natural unchecked feelings, and entertaining opinions less modelled upon what they read. One ebullition of his own native disposition was, however, not very amiable. Near Charing Cross, a poor houseless female vagrant came up to us and asked charity. Now, it was in no respect surprising to me, that Mr. Irving should refuse to give her anything, knowing that so many excellent people systematically set their faces against street alms; and a man, the most kind-hearted in the world, whose resources are limited, may very reasonably prefer throwing whatever he has at his disposal into the channels of well organized charitable institutions. Not, therefore, the refusal, but the manner of the refusal, it was which surprised me. Mr. Irving shook off the poor shivering suppliant, whose manner was timid and dejected, with a roughness that

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would have better become a parish beadle towards a stout masterful beggar, counterfeiting the popular character of shipwrecked mariner. Yet I am far from thinking, or wishing to insinuate, that Edward Irving was deficient in benignity. It was the overmastering demoniac fervor of his nature, the constitutional riot in his blood, more than any harshness of disposition, which prompted his fierce refusal.

It is remarkable, and I mention it as no proof of any sagacity of myself, but, on the contrary, as a proof of broad and palpable indications, open and legible to him who ran, that from what I saw of Mr. Edward Irving at this first interview, I drew an augury, and immediately expressed it to more than one friend; that he was destined to a melancholy close of his career, in lunacy. I drew my judgment from the expression and the peculiar restlessness of his eye, combined with the untamable fervor of his manner, and his evident craving after intense states of excitement. I believe that public applause, or at least public sympathy with his own agitated condition of feeling, and public attention, at any rate to himself, as a great moral power thundering and lightening through the upper regions of the London atmosphere, really became indispensable to his comfort. The effect of his eloquence, great as that certainly was, had been considerably exaggerated to the general estimate, by the obstacles opposed to the popular curiosity, in the mere necessities of the narrow chapel within which he preached. Stories of carriage panels beaten in, chapel windows beaten out, as entrances for ladies of rank and distinguished senators — such stories to awaken the public interest, and then (as consequences of that interest, which reacted to sustain and widen it) stories of royal princesses, lord chancellors, and prime ministers, going, in spite of all difficulties, to hear

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the new apostle of the North — these things procured for Mr. Irving, during the early novitiate of his London career, if not great audiences, (which, numerically speaking, his chapel would not have admitted,) yet so memorable a conflict of competition for the small space available to those who had no private right of admission, that inevitably the result was misunderstood, or, at least, misappreciated by the public. The smaller was the disposable accommodation, so much the hotter was the contest: and thus a small chapel, and a small congregation told more effectually in his favor, more emphatically proclaimed his sudden popularity, than the largest could have done. Meantime, the presbytery, availing themselves of the sudden enthusiasm called into life by this splendid meteor, collected large subscriptions for a new chapel. This, being built upon a scale proportioned to the money, offered ample accommodation to the public curiosity. That feeling could not wholly have subsided: but many, like Wilberforce, had found themselves sufficiently gratified by a single experience of Mr. Irving's powers; others, upon principle, were unwilling to leave their old pastors — not to mention that, for the majority, this would have involved a secession from the particular creed to which they adhered; and, when deductions were made from Mr. Irving's audiences, upon these and other accounts, those who still went as extra auditors were no longer numerous enough, now that they were diffused through a large chapel, to create the former tumultuous contests for admission.

The enthusiasm of the public had now subsided and settled into a condition more uniform, and no longer capable of holding up a mirror which reflected Mr. Irving's own intense state of exaltation. It was the state of collapse which succeeded in his mind, the want of

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correspondence which he found between the public zeal to be taught or moved and his own to teach or move; this it was, I can hardly doubt, which drove him into those crazy speculations which eventually cost him the general respect, and led to an open breach between himself and the trustees for the management of the property embarked upon the chapel. Unable to win the popular astonishment by the legitimate display of his extraordinary powers, he attempted to secure the same end by extravagance. The whole extent of this extravagance, it is true that he did not perceive; for his mind was unhinged. But still the insanity, which had preyed upon him from the very first, lay more in his moral nature and in a disease of his will than in the functions of his intellect. Disappointment, vexation of heart, wounded pride, and, latterly, perhaps, some tinge of remorse for the abuse which he had made of his magnificent endowments, all combined, with the constitutional fever in his blood, to sap his health and spirits. That he was very unhappy, latterly, I have no doubt; nor was I, for my part, ever called upon to feel so powerfully the conviction that here was a ruined man of genius, and a power in the first rank of great moral agencies, an orator the most Demosthenic of our age, descending rapidly to night and utter extinction, as during the whole latter years of Edward Irving's troubled existence. I am not singular in my estimate of him as an orator: — Mr. Canning, a most accomplished orator himself, and, as a great *artist*, the first orator of our times, but perhaps, for that very reason, less likely to do full justice in a case of power that was altogether natural, and no way indebted to art, even he (when visiting Mr. Bolton of Storrs, on Windermere) said something very nearly approaching to what I have here said. I did not hear it myself; but I afterwards heard it from many who did.

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He was the only man of our times who realized one's idea of Paul preaching at Athens, or defending himself before King Agrippa. Terrific meteor! unhappy son of fervid genius, which mastered thyself even more that the rapt audiences which at one time hung upon thy lips! were the cup of life once again presented to thy lips, wouldst thou drink again; or would thou not rather turn away from it with shuddering abomination? Sleep, Boanerges! and let the memory of man settle only upon thy colossal powers, without a thought of those intellectual aberrations which were more powerful for thy own ruin than for the misleading of others!

London, however, great as were its attractions, did but rarely draw me away from Westmoreland. There I found more and more a shelter and an anchor for my own wishes. Originally, as I have mentioned, the motive which drew me to this country, in combination with its own exceeding beauty, had been the society of Wordsworth. But in this I committed a great oversight. Men of extraordinary genius and force of mind are far better as objects for distant admiration than as daily companions; — not that I would insinuate anything to the disadvantage of Mr. Wordsworth. What I have to say in the way of complaint, shall be said openly and frankly; this is but fair; for insinuations or covert accusations always leave room for misconstruction and for large exaggeration. Mr. Wordsworth is not only a man of principle and integrity, according to the severest standard of such a character, but he is even a man, in many respects, of amiable manners. Still there are traits of character about him, and modes of expressing them in his manners, which make a familiar or neighborly intercourse with him painful and mortifying. Pride, in its most exalted form,

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he was entitled to feel; but something there was, in the occasional expression of this pride, which was difficult to bear. Upon ground where he was really strong, Wordsworth was not arrogant. In a question of criticism, he was open to any man's suggestions. But there *were* fields of thought or of observation which he seemed to think locked up and sacred to himself; and any alien entrance upon those fields he treated almost as intrusions and usurpations. One of these, and which naturally occurred the most frequently, was the whole theory of picturesque beauty, as presented to our notice at every minute by the bold mountainous scenery amongst which we lived, and as it happened to be modified by the seasons of the year, by the time of day, or by the accidents of light and shade. Now Wordsworth and his sister really had, as I have before acknowledged, a peculiar depth of organic sensibility to the effects of form and color; and to *them* I was willing to concede a vote, such as, in ancient Rome, was called a 'prerogative vote,' upon such questions. But, not content with this, Wordsworth virtually claimed the same precedency for all who were connected with himself, though merely by affinity, and therefore standing under no colorable presumption (as blood relations might have done) of inheriting the same constitutional gifts of organization. To everybody, standing out of this sacred and privileged pale, Wordsworth behaved with absolute insult in cases of this nature: he did not even appear to listen; but, as if what they said on such a theme must be childish prattle, turned away with an air of perfect indifference; began talking, perhaps, with another person on another subject; or, at all events, never noticed what we said, by an apology for an answer. I, very early in our connection, having observed this inhuman arrogance, took care never afterwards to lay myself under

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the possibility of such an insult. Systematically I avoided saying anything, however suddenly tempted into any expression of my feelings, upon the natural appearances, whether in the sky or on the earth. Thus I evaded one cause of quarrel; and so far Wordsworth was not aware of the irritation and disgust which he had founded in the minds of his friends. But there were other manifestations of the same ungenial and exclusive pride, even still more offensive and of wider application.

With other men, upon finding or thinking one's self ill-used, all one had to do was to make an explanation; and, with any reasonable grounds of complaint, or any reasonable temper to manage, one was tolerably sure of redress. Not so with Wordsworth; he had learned from Mrs. C—— a vulgar phrase for all attempts at reciprocal explanations — he called them contemptuously '*fending and proving*.' And you might lay your account with being met *in limine*, and further progress barred, by a declaration to this effect — 'Mr. X Y Z, I will have nothing to do with fending and proving.' This amounted, in other words, to saying, that he conceived himself to be liberated from those obligations of justice and courtesy by which other men are bound. Now, I knew myself well enough to be assured that, under such treatment, I should feel too much indignation and disgust to persevere in courting the acquaintance of a man who thus avowed his contempt for the laws of equal dealing. Redress I knew that I should never get; and, accordingly, I reasoned thus: — 'I have been ill used to a certain extent; but do I think *that* a sufficient reason for giving up all my intimacy with a man like Wordsworth? If I do *not*, let me make no complaint; for, inevitably, if I *do* make complaint, that will be the result. For, though I am able to bear the particular wrong I now complain of, yet I feel that even from Words-

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worth I could not tolerate an open and contemptuous refusal of justice. The result, then, if I pursue this matter, will be to rob me of Wordsworth's acquaintance. Reparation, already necessary to my feelings, will then become necessary to my honor: I shall fail to obtain it; and then it will become my *duty* to renounce his acquaintance. I will, therefore, rest contentedly where I am.'

What then were the cases of injustice which I had to complain of? Such they were as between two men could hardly have arisen; but wherever there are women — unless the terms on which the parties stand are most free and familiar, so that, fast as clouds arise of misunderstanding, explanations may have full leave to move concurrently, and nothing be left for either side to muse upon as wrong, or meditated insult — I hold it next to impossible that occasions should not arise in which both parties will suspect some undervaluing, or some failure in kindness or respect. I, to give one example, had, for the controller of my domestic *manége*, a foolish, selfish, and ignorant old maid. Naturally, she ought to have been no enemy to the Wordsworths, for she had once lived as a servant with them; and, for my service, she had been engaged, at high wages, by Miss Wordsworth herself. These motives to a special regard for the W.'s, were not weighty enough to overrule her selfishness. Having unlimited power in all which regarded the pecuniary arrangements of my house, she became a person of some consideration and some power amongst her little sphere. In my absence, she took upon herself the absolute command of everything; and I could easily perceive, by different anecdotes which reached me, that she was jealous of any abridgment to her own supreme discretion, such as might naturally arise through any exercise of those friendly rights, claimed in my absence, by those friends who conceived themselves to have

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the freedom of my house, and the right to use its accommodations in any honorable way prompted by their own convenience. To my selfish house-keeper this was a dangerous privilege ; for, if it had brought no other evil with it, inevitably it would sometimes lay a restraint upon her gadding propensities, and detain her at home during months when otherwise my great distance gave her the amplest privilege of absence. In shaping remedies for this evil, which, from natural cowardice, she found it difficult to oppose in her own person, she had a ready resource in charging upon myself the measures which she found convenient. '"*Master*" [which was her technical designation for myself] thinks thus,' or 'Master left such and such directions.' These were obvious fictions, for a woman so selfish and mean. Any real friend of mine ought to have read, in the very situation which this woman held — in her obvious interest, connected with her temper — a sufficient commentary upon the real state of things. A man more careless than myself of the petty interests concerned in such a case, could not exist. And it may be supposed with what disgust and what reasonable indignation I heard of opinions uttered upon my character by those who called themselves my friends ; opinions shaped to meet, not any conduct which I had ever held, or which it could be pretended that I had countenanced, but to meet the false imputations of an interested woman, who was by those imputations doing to me a far deeper injury than to those whom she merely shut out from a momentary accommodation.

But why not, upon discovering such forgeries and misrepresentations, openly and loudly denounce them for what they were ? I answer, that when a man is too injuriously wounded by the words of his *soi-disant* friends, oftentimes a strong movement of pride makes it painful for him to

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degrade himself by explanations or justifications. Besides that, when once a false idea has prepossessed the minds of your friends, justification oftentimes becomes impossible. My servant, in such a case, would have worn the air of one who had offended me, not by a base falsehood, but by an imprudence in betraying too much of the truth; and, doubtless, when my back was turned, she would insinuate that her own interest had obliged her to put up with my disavowal of what she had done; but that, in literal truth, she had even fallen short of my directions. Others, again, would think that, though no specific directions might have been given to her, possibly she had collected my sincere wishes from words of complaint dropped casually upon former occasions. Thus, in short, partly I disdained, partly I found it impossible, to exonerate myself from those most false imputations; and I sate down half-contentedly under accusations which, in the very solemnity of truth, applied less justly to myself than to any one person I knew amongst the whole circle of my acquaintance. The result was, that ever after I hated the name of the woman at whose hands I had sustained this wrong, so far as such a woman could be thought worthy of hatred; and that I began to despise a little some of those who had been silly and undiscerning enough to accredit such representations; and one of them especially, who, though liberally endowed with sunshiny temper and sweetness of disposition, was perhaps a person weak, intellectually, beyond the ordinary standards of female weakness.

Hence began the waning of my friendship with the Wordsworths. But, in reality, never after the first year or so from my first introduction, had I felt much possibility of drawing the bonds of friendship tight with a man of Wordsworth's nature. He seemed to me too much like his own Pedlar in the 'Excursion;' a man so diffused

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amongst innumerable objects of equal attraction, that he had no cells left in his heart for strong individual attachments. I was not singular in this feeling. Professor Wilson had become estranged from him: Coleridge, one of his earliest friends, had become estranged: no one person could be deemed fervently his friend. And, with respect to Coleridge, he certainly had strong reason to be estranged; and equally certain it is that he held a profound sense of those reasons for some years. He told me himself, and this was his peculiar inference from the case, and what he made its moral, that married people rarely retain much capacity of friendship. Their thoughts, and cares, and anxieties, are all so much engrossed by those who naturally and rightly sit nearest to their hearts, that other friends, chosen, perhaps, originally for intellectual qualities chiefly, and seen only at casual intervals, must, by mere human necessity, come to droop and fade in their remembrance. I see no absolute necessity for this; nor have I felt it since my own experience of the situation supposed by Coleridge has enable me to judge. But, at all events, poor Coleridge had found it true in his own case. The rupture between him and Wordsworth, which rather healed itself by lapse of time and the burning dim of fierce recollections, than by any formal reconciliation or pardon exchanged between the parties, arose thus: — An old acquaintance of Coleridge's happening to visit the Lakes, proposed to carry Coleridge with him to London on his return. This gentleman's wife, a lady of some distinction as to person and intellectual accomplishments, had an equal pleasure in Coleridge's society. They had a place disposable in their travelling carriage; and thus all things tallied towards the general purpose. Meantime, Wordsworth, irritated with what he viewed as excessive vanity in this gentleman, (for his plan of taking Coleridge

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to London and making him an inmate in his house, had originated in a higher purpose of weaning Coleridge from opium,) ridiculed the whole scheme pointedly, as a visionary and Quixotic enterprise, such as no man of worldly experience could ever seriously countenance. The dispute — for it took that shape — tempted or drove Wordsworth into supporting his own views of Coleridge's absolute incorrigibility, by all the anecdotes he could gather together illustrative of the utter and irredeemable slavery which had mastered the poor opium-martyr's will. And, most assuredly, he drew such a picture of Coleridge, and of his sensual effeminacy, as ought not to have proceeded from the hands of a friend. Notwithstanding all this, the purpose held amongst the three contracting parties: they went southwards; and, for a time, the plan was still farther realized, of making Coleridge, not merely a travelling companion, but also an inmate of their house. This plan, however, fell through, in consequence of incompatible habits. And, in the feud which followed, this gentleman and his wife upbraided Coleridge with the opinions held of him by his own oldest and most valued friend, William Wordsworth; and, perhaps as much to defend themselves as to annoy Coleridge, they repeated many of the arguments used by Wordsworth, and of the anecdotes by which he supported them; anecdotes which, unfortunately, vouched for their own authenticity, and were self-attested, since none but Wordsworth could have known them.

I have mentioned the kind of wrongs which first caused my personal feelings to grow colder towards the Wordsworths; and there were, afterwards, others added to these, of a nature still more irritating, because they related to more delicate topics. And, again and again, I was provoked to wonder that persons, of whom some commanded respect and attention simply as the near connections of a

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great man, should so far forget the tenure on which their influence rested, as to arrogate a tone of authority upon their own merits. Meantime, however much my personal feelings had altered gradually towards Wordsworth; and more, I think, in connection with his pride than through any or all other causes acting jointly, (insomuch that I used to say, Never describe Wordsworth as equal in pride to Lucifer; no, but if you have occasion to write a life of Lucifer, set down that, by possibility, in respect to pride, he might be some type of Wordsworth;) still, I say, my intellectual homage to Wordsworth had not been shaken. Even this, however, in a course of years, had gradually been modified. It is impossible to imagine the perplexity of mind which possessed me when I heard Wordsworth ridicule many books which I had been accustomed to admire profoundly. For some years, so equally ineradicable was either influence — my recollection, on the one hand, of the books despised, and of their power over my feelings; on the other, my blind and unquestioning veneration for Wordsworth — that I was placed in a strange sort of contradictory life; feeling that things were and were not at the same instant; believing and not believing in the same breath. And not until I had read much in German critics, of what they were the first to notice, viz., the accident of *einseitigkeit*, or *one-sidedness*, as a peculiarity not unfrequently besetting the strongest minds, did I slowly come to the discovery that Wordsworth, beyond all men, perhaps, that have ever lived, (and very likely as one condition towards the possibility of his own exceeding originality,) was *einseitig* in extremity. This one-sidedness shows itself most conspicuously in his dislikings; but occasionally even in his likings. Cotton, for instance, whom, in one of his critical disquisitions, he praises so extravagantly for his fancy, has never found an admirer

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except in himself. And this mistake to be made in a field of such enormous opulence as is that of fancy!

But, omitting many flagrant instances, the one which most appalled myself was the following: — The 'Canterbury Tales' of the Miss Lees are sufficiently well known, but not sufficiently appreciated; and one reason may be, that the very inferior tales of Miss Sophia Lee are mingled with those of Miss Harriet. Two of those written by Harriet, viz., *The Landlady's Tale* and *The German's*, are absolutely unrivalled as specimens of fine narration. With respect to the latter, it is well known that Lord Byron travestied this inimitable tale into a most miserable drama; interweaving with the dialogue of his piece every word in the original conversations, unaltered nearly, and assuredly not bettered. And the very act of borrowing a plot from a tale in which so very much depends upon the plot, and where it is of a kind that will not bend to alterations, or modifications of any kind; this in itself bespoke a poor ambition, and the servile spirit* of a plagiarist. This most splendid tale I put into the hands of Wordsworth; and for once, having, I suppose, nothing else to read, he condescended to run through it. I shall not report his opinion, which, in fact, was no opinion; for the whole colossal exhibition of fiendish grandeur in Conrad; the fine delineation of mixed power and weakness in Siegendorf; and the exquisite relief given to the whole by the truly Shaksperian portrait of feminine innocence and nobility in Josephine; he had failed so much as to guess at. All that he wondered at was the Machiavelian insight into motives, and the play of human char-

* It is quite unknown to the world that Lord Byron's poem of 'Lara' had already contained a gross plagiarism from Miss H. Lee. The whole outline of the story, and many remarkable phrases, are borrowed from the *German's Tale*.

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acter; with respect to which he said, coldly enough, that it left an uncomfortable impression of a woman as being too clever. Schiller's 'Wallenstein,' again, was equally unpleasing to him and unintelligible. Most people have been enraptured with the beautiful group of Max. Piccolomini and the Princess Thekla; both because they furnish a sweet relief to the general harsh impression from so many worldly-minded, scheming, treacherous, malignant ruffians, meeting together, in one camp, as friends, or rivals, or betrayers; and also on their own separate account, even apart from the relation which they bear to the whole; for both are noble, both innocent, both young, and both unfortunate: a combination of advantages towards winning our pity which has rarely been excelled. Yet Wordsworth's sole remark to me, upon Wallenstein, was this; that he could not comprehend Schiller's meaning or object in entailing so much unhappiness upon these young people; a remark that, to me, was incomprehensible; for why, then, did Shakspeare make Ophelia, Desdemona, Cordelia unhappy? Or why, to put the question more generally, did any man ever write a tragedy?

Perhaps, to the public, it may illustrate Wordsworth's one-sidedness more strikingly, if I should mention my firm persuasion that he has never read one page of Sir Walter Scott's novels. Of this I am satisfied; though it is true that, latterly, feeling more indulgently to the public favorites as the public has come to appreciate himself more justly, he has spoken of these tales in a tone of assumed enthusiasm.* One of Mrs. Radcliffe's romances, viz., 'The Italian,' he had, by some strange accident, read; read, but only to laugh at it; whilst, on the other hand, the novels of Smollett, Fielding, and Le Sage —

* 'Yarrow Revisited.'

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so disgusting by their moral scenery and the whole state of vicious society in which they keep the reader moving: these, and merely for the ability of the execution, he read and remembered with extreme delight.

Without going over any other examples, it may well be understood that, by these striking instances of defective sympathy in Wordsworth with the universal feelings of his age, my intellectual, as well as my personal regard for him, would be likely to suffer. In fact, I learned, gradually, that he was not only liable to human error, but that, in some points, and those of large extent, he was frailer and more infirm than most of his fellow-men. I viewed this defect, it is very true, as being the condition and the price, as it were, or ransom of his own extraordinary power and originality; but still it raised a curtain which had hitherto sustained my idolatry. I viewed him now as a *mixed* creature, made up of special infirmity and special strength. And, finally, I now viewed him as no longer capable of an equal friendship.

With this revolution in my feelings, why did I not now leave Westmoreland? I will say: Other attractions had arisen; different in kind; equally potent in degree. These stepped in to enchain me, precisely as my previous chains were unlinking themselves, and leaving me in freedom.

In these sketches (written with so much hurry as, in no one instance that I remember, to have allowed me time for once reading over a single paragraph of what I had written,) I have usually thought it best, in the few cases where I had afterwards an opportunity of correcting the press errors, simply to restore the word which it was probable or apparent that I had originally written; or which, at least, I must have meant to write. Changes

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more extensive than this it could not be advisable to make, in a case where I had no opening for a thorough recast of the whole. Even in those instances where a thought, or an expression, or a statement of facts, might be calculated to do me some little injury, unless it were expanded, or accompanied with an explanation, or more cautiously restricted, I thought it better, on the whole, to abide the hazard; placing my reliance for the redress of any harsh judgment on the absolute certainty, that each successive month washes out of the public mind every trace of what may have occupied it in any previous month. But, in this sketch of *Walking Stewart*, there is something which demands a more instant explanation; for it happens that, at this moment of revising the press errors, an anecdote occurs to me, which illustrates the danger, in such a case, of a permanent misconstruction. Many years ago, I was spending a few days at the country-house of a foreign merchant. His wife, a very intelligent, and even intellectual person, came to me one morning with a book in her hand, of which several leaves had been torn into fragments. Her features, generally placid and amiable, wore an expression of matronly scorn. She blushed, but it was more with indignation than with feminine shame, as she put the book into my hands. It was mine, she said, my property; and therefore she had not tossed it into the fire. One of her infant children had found it, and had dealt with it as I saw: 'and, if the child had destroyed the whole of it, she could not think that I was much entitled to complain.' It was one of my Peripatetic friend's essays, under some such title as *The Apocalypse of Nature, or, The Revelation of Reason.*

This accident, directing my eye to the part of the volume which had been injured, reminded me of a fact which otherwise I had naturally enough forgotten, viz.,

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that Walking Stewart had occasionally touched on subjects quite unfitted for a public treatment; or, at least, as questions for philosophic speculation, calling for the disguise of a learned language. I made my peace with the lady by assuring her, first, that (this particular volume being one of many by the same author) I had not been aware of the gross passages which appeared to disfigure it near the end; and, secondly, (which part of my apology it is that I now direct to my readers,) that my personal knowledge of the man modified to my mind the doctrines of the author. Things said broadly and coarsely, which could not but shock strangers, to *my* interpretation, were blunted and defeated in their effect by the private knowledge I had of the writer's ultimate object, and of the inartificial mode in which he dealt with his native language. Language was too complex a machine for his management. He had never been an accurate scholar; and his idiom had entangled itself with the many exotic idioms which at times he had used familiarly for years.

Under the spirit of this general apology, I beg to shelter whatever I may have asserted of Mr. Stewart as a philosophic speculator. He was a man religious by temperament and the tendency of all his feelings; yet it is true that his mere understanding, yielding itself up to speculations which he could not manage, has prompted the most scornful expressions towards all doctrinal religions alike. He was pure and temperate in his habits of life beyond the common standard of men; yet his page was sometimes stained with sentiments too gross and animal. Ignorant of philosophy in its forms and terminology, he was, by capacity of profound reverie, a true philosopher — in the sense that he felt his way to truths greater and deeper than he could always explain; and, finally, though his books are filled with strong (oftentimes

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harsh) truths, he was, as a man, the most comprehensively benign, the most largely in sympathy with human nature, of any whom I have yet known. He passed his latter years in utter deafness; [in noticing which, let me observe that the image of the shell which I have used, though not consciously, at the moment of writing, taken from Wordsworth's 'Excursion,' or from Mr. Savage Landor's 'Gebir,' must have been derived from one or other of those poems:] he was deaf, as respected any music that could come to *him* from the world: and he was also dumb, as respected any music that could reach the world from *him:* so profound was his inability to explain himself, except at times, in conversation. Actually, therefore, he will be lost and forgotten. Potentially, he was a great man.

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CHAPTER XXII.

TALFOURD. — THE LONDON MAGAZINE. — JUNIUS. — CLARE. — ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

Whilst I am upon the ground of London, that 'nation of London,' (as I have elsewhere called it,) which I have so often visited, and yet for periods so brief, that my entire London life, if transposed from its dislocated periods into one continuous aggregate, would not make above one and a half year in the whole result, it may be as well to notice some other circumstances, partly of a literary, partly of a general interest, and which might be worthy of notice in any man's life, but were so especially in the life of one who held some peculiar principles — compromises, in a measure between the extreme principles commonly avowed — which I shall explain in connection with the occasion. First, then, confining myself to my London literary experience: it was not, certainly, extensive, nor was I in spirits or circumstances to wish it such. I lived in the most austere retirement; and the few persons whom I saw occasionally, or whose hospitalities I received, were *gens de plume*, and professedly of my own order as practising literati, but of the highest pretensions. Lamb I have already mentioned. Serjeant Talfourd I became acquainted with in the beautiful hall of the Middle Temple, whence (after dining together in the agreeable style inherited from elder days, and so pleasantly recalling

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the noble refectories of Oxford amidst the fervent tumults of London) we sometimes adjourned to our coffee at the chambers of the future author of *Ion*, and enjoyed the luxury of conversation, with the *élite* of the young Templars, upon the most stirring themes of life or literature. Him, indeed, I had known when a Temple student. But, in 1821, when I went up to London avowedly for the purpose of exercising my pen, as the one sole source then open to me for extricating myself from a special embarrassment, (failing which case of dire necessity, I believe that I should never have written a line for the press;) Mr. Talfourd having become a practising barrister, I felt that I had no right to trespass upon his time, without some stronger warrant than any I could plead in my own person. I had, therefore, requested a letter of introduction to him from Wordsworth. That was a spell which, with this young lawyer, I knew to be all-potent; and, accordingly, I now received from him a great deal of kindness, which came specially commended to a man in dejected spirits, by the radiant courtesy and the cheerfulness of his manners: for, of all the men whom I have known, after long intercourse with the business of the world, the Serjeant is the one who most preserves, to all outward appearance, the freshness and integrity of his youthful spirits.

From him, also, I obtained an introduction to Messrs. Taylor & Hessey, who had very recently, upon the melancholy death of Mr. Scott, in consequence of his duel with Mr. Christie, purchased *The London Magazine*, and were themselves joint editors of that journal. The terms they held out to contributors were ultra-munificent — more so than had yet been heard of in any quarter whatsoever: and, upon that understanding — seeing that money was just then, of necessity, the one sole object to

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which I looked in the cultivation of literature — naturally enough it happened that to *them* I offered my earliest paper, viz., 'The Confessions of an English Opium-Eater.' Of the two publishers, who were both hospitable and friendly men, with cultivated minds, one, viz., Mr. Taylor, was himself an author, and, upon one subject, a most successful one. He had written, indeed, at that time, and since then, I understand, has written again upon different parts of political economy. But to all who are acquainted with the great reformation of this science, effected by David Ricardo, it will appear, as a matter of course, upon looking into Mr. Taylor's works, that he should be found to have merely trifled. In reality, the stern application of one single doctrine — that, namely, which expounds the laws of value — would be sufficient, as I believe, of itself, to demonstrate the refutation of Mr. Taylor's, as of so many other erroneous views, in this severe but much-bewildering science. In Mr. Taylor's case, from what I saw of his opinions in 1821, I have reason to think that Locke had been the chief instrument in leading him astray. Mr. Taylor professed himself a religious dissenter; and, in all the political bearings of dissent, he travelled so far, that if, in any one instance, he manifested an illiberal spirit, it was in the temper which he held habitually towards the Church of England. Then first, indeed, it was — and amongst the company which I sometimes saw at Mr. Taylor's — that I became aware of the deadly hatred — savage, determined hatred, made up for mischief — which governed a large part of the well-educated dissenters in their feelings towards the Church of England. Being myself, not by birth and breeding only, but upon the deliberate adoption of my judgment, an affectionate son of that church, in respect to her doctrines, her rites, her discipline, and her internal government; I

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was both shocked and grieved to meet with what seemed to me so much levity of rash judgment amongst the thoughtful and well-principled — so harsh an illiberality amongst the liberal, so little consideration amongst the considerate. One thing was clear to me: that, in general, this angry spirit of hostility was grounded upon a false, because a superannuated, set of facts. Never, in any great public corporation, had there been, as I well knew, so large a reformation as in the Church of England, during the last forty years. The collateral Church of Methodists, hardly a Dissenting Church, raised up by John Wesley, had, after one generation or so, begun to react upon the Metropolitan Church, out of whose bosom it had been projected. The two universities of England had constantly fed from within this growing galvanism applied from without: Mr. Simeon, Professor Farish, Dean Milner, in Cambridge; Mr. Faber, the little society of Edmund Hall, &c., in Oxford; Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Babington, Mr. Thornton, in the Senate; Mrs. Hannah More in literature; severally offered a nucleus, around which, I have understood, the open profession of a deeper, more fervid, and apostolical spirit in religious opinions and religious practices, had been emboldened to gather; and the result has been that, whilst the English Church, from Queen Anne's day to the French Revolution, was at the lowest point of its depression, and absolutely cankered to the heart by the spirit of worldliness that same Church in our days, when standing on the brink, apparently, of great trials, and summoned to put forth peculiar vigilance of watch and ward, if not even to face great and trying storms, has, by great examples, by extensive religious associations, and by a powerful press, concurring with the unusual thoughtfulness generated by the French Revolution and the vast changes in its train, most seasonably

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been brought gradually into a frame and composition which all who have looked with interest upon the case, deem much nearer than at any other stage of its history to the condition of a primitive and truly pastoral church.

With these views I was as much astonished as I was grieved to find the Established Church an object, at this particular crisis, of enmity so profound. Thus, however, it was. Mr. Taylor, I apprehend, shared in all the dominant feelings of the dissenters, such as I heard them frequently expressed in his society; and naturally, therefore, he entertained, amongst other literary opinions, a peculiar and perhaps blind veneration for Locke. Locke, in fact, is made an idol amongst the 'Rational' Dissenters: those whose religion begins and terminates in the understanding. This idolatry is paid to him in a double character, as the most eminent patron of religious liberty, and as the propounder of views in Christianity pretty much akin to their own in want of depth and in 'anti-mysticism,' as a friend might call it; but, speaking sincerely, in hostility to all that is unfathomable by the mere discursive understanding. I am not here going to entertain so large a theme as the philosophy of Locke. In another place, I shall, perhaps, astonish the reader by one or two of the yet undetected blunders he has committed in his philosophy. But, confining myself to his political economy, I may take occasion to notice one error, with regard to that part of his pretensions, which has misled many. By mere accident, Locke was right, in his dispute with Lowndes of the Treasury, upon a question which arose in connection with the great recoinage of King William's days. At the request of Lord Somers, Locke undertook the discussion; and, as he happened to be right in opposition to a man whose official duty it was to have understood the subject thoroughly upon which he

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speculated so wildly, this advantage, settling, in *his* case, upon a novice matched against a doctor, procured for Locke an enthusiasm of admiration which the case did not really warrant; and it was afterwards imagined, by those who looked back casually into Lock's treatises, that he was a sound economist. But the fact is, political economy had, in those days, no sort of existence: no one doctrine, not so much as that which unfolds the benefits from the division of labor, was then known: the notion, again, that a nation did or could benefit by commerce, otherwise than by the accident of selling more than she bought, and, as a consequence, by accumulating the balance in the form of the precious metals — this notion was inconceivable to the human understanding at the era of Locke: no progress had been made in dissipating that delusion; and Locke was as much enslaved by it as any other man. Possibly — and there is some room to think it — he was a little in advance of the Ciceronian idea, that the very possibility of a gain, in any transaction of sale between two parties, was logically conceivable only upon the assumption of a deception on one side: that, unless they would 'lie pretty considerably,' (*nisi admodum mentiantur*,) merchants must resign all hope of profit. The grounds of value, again, were as little known to Locke as the consequences of those grounds; and, in short, he had not made one step ahead of his age in any one branch of political economy. But, in his dispute with Lowndes, the victory was gained, not over scientific blunders by scientific lights; no, but over mere logical blunders, the very grossest, by common sense the most palpable. It was no victory of a special science, but one of general logic. There were no positive truths elicited, but simply a refutation, scarcely in that age needed, of some self-contradictory errors. Lowndes had so far con-

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fused himself as to suppose that the same ounce of silver might, at the same time and place, be worth more or less than itself, when thrown into the shape of coin. The most obvious truths Locke himself appears to have overlooked, notwithstanding the English silver currency at that moment illustrated some of them. Locke, therefore, exposed a set of errors which could not have arisen in anything short of Irish confusion of ideas; and the truths of an affirmative order belonging to the subject, which, even under the feeble light of those times, might have been detected, escaped him altogether. So much I have thought it right to say on Mr. Taylor's Political Economy, and the sort of sanction which he seeks to draw from Locke, who has led many others astray, by the authority of his name, upon a subject over which he has no sort of jurisdiction; neither did that age furnish any one who had.

But if Mr. Taylor failed (as, honestly, I believe he did) in this field, in another he effected a discovery so brilliant, so powerfully sustained by evidences overwhelming and irresistible, after (be it remembered) efforts the most elaborate and numerous to solve the problem, that he certainly deserves a high place, and perhaps next to Bentley, in this species of exploratory literature. With little or no original hints to direct him in his path, he undertook the great literary enigma of Junius — Who and what was he? — and brought that question to a decision that never can be unsettled or disturbed by any person except one who is unacquainted with the arguments. I have understood, but perhaps not upon sufficient authority, that the notice of this work in *The Edinburgh Review* was drawn up by Lord Brougham. If so, I must confess my surprise: there is not much of a lawyer's accuracy in the abstract of the evidence, nor is the result stated with

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the boldness which the premises warrant. Chief Justice Dallas, of the Common Ples, was wont to say that a man arraigned as Junius upon the evidence here accumulated against Sir Philip Francis, must have been convicted in any court of Europe. But I would go much farther: I would say that there are single proofs, which (taken separately and apart from all the rest) are sufficient to sustain the whole *onus* of the charge. I would also argue thus: — If a man in one character (his avowed character, suppose, of Francis) uses a word in some peculiar sense, or in some very irregular manner, then it will become high argument against this man as liable to the suspicion of having been the masque in the assumed character of Junius, that this masque shall also be proved to have used the same word in the same anomalous way. Suppose now that any ordinary presumption, or any coincidence of ordinary force, shall be considered $= x$; then I may be entitled to value this remarkable coincidence in anomalous practice as x^2; or, however, as equal to some higher power of the same order. But, now, suppose further that Francis has also, in his mode of correcting 'proof-sheets' and 'revises' from the press, fallen into a constant misconception of the function assigned by compositors to a particular mark; and suppose that this misconception is by no means a natural or obvious misconception, but one which rests upon some accident of individual blundering; then I should say that if, upon examination pursued through a multitude of specimens, it comes out flagrantly that Junius has also fallen into the same very peculiar and *unobvious* error; in this case, we have a presumption for the identity of the two characters, Francis and Junius, which (taken separately) is entitled to be valued as a high function of x. But I say further, that a *second* presumption of the same order may lawfully demand to be reckoned

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as multiplying its own value into the second value. Meantime the tendency of all the external arguments drawn from circumstantial or personal considerations, from local facts, or the records of party, flows in the very same channel; with all the internal presumptions derived from the style, from the anomalous use of words, from the anomalous construction of the syntax, from the peculiar choice of images, from the arbitrary use of the technical short-hand for correcting typographical errors, from capricious punctuation, and even from penmanship, (which, of itself, taken separately, has sometimes determined the weightiest legal interests.) Proofs, in fact, rush upon us more plentiful than blackberries: and the case ultimately begins to be fatiguing, from the very plethora and riotous excess of evidence. It would stimulate attention more, and pique the interest of curiosity more pungently, if there were some conflicting evidence, some shadow of presumptions against Francis. But there are none, absolutely none.

Under these circumstances, the reader will begin to say, How came it then that the controversy about Junius, which has raged for upwards of half a century, and has already produced books and pamphlets past all numbering, (insomuch that I have heard of several persons projecting a *Bibliotheca Juniana, or Museum Junianum;*) how came it, the reader will ask, that this controversy did not drop at once and for ever, as a question summarily but irreversibly decided, as a balloon from which all the inflating air had suddenly escaped? How is it that we still see the old Junian *pompholyx*, that ancient and venerable bubble, still floating in the upper air? This may be explained out of two facts: one being, that very few people have made themselves familiar with the arguments. I have never yet happened to meet anybody who had mastered the

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investigation so far as to be aware that there was anything more made out against Sir Philip Francis than some vague presumptions, founded on similarity of handwritings, and perhaps some coincidence between the main periods of Junius as to his rise and setting, with certain known critical incidents in the career of Francis. The coherence and interdependency in the total chainwork of evidence, and the independent strength of each particular link, is little known to the public. That is one reason for the non-decisiveness of this most decisive book. A second is, the absurd tradition, which has taken root in the public mind, that some all-superseding revelation is to be made upon this subject at the death of some Pitt or Grenville unknown. For many a year it was asserted, every six months, in the newspapers, that Lord Grenville was the man at whose death a final discovery was to be made, such as nobody could gainsay. And to this day, though the Duke of Buckingham, Lord Grenville, and every other person of that generation in the Pitt and Grenville families, has died and 'made no sign,' the same ridiculous legend is occasionally repeated in the newspapers. But the best possible answer to this idle fable is, simply, to ask a man for one moment's reflection upon its meaning; for what is it that any man *could* establish by his death, or by any act consequent upon his death, such as a will or codicil to a will? *Living*, perhaps Lord Grenville might have argued the case with Mr. Taylor upon the basis of his own recollections; but, being dead, what more could he possibly do than leave behind him a writing, certificate, or memorial, that somebody had told him he was Junius, or that he had personal reasons for suspecting that such or such a person might be Junius. So that the utmost result would have been to make out some rival case. A third reason is the same which

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influenced Mr. Woodfall: this gentleman having long cherished the idea, an idea encouraged by various artifices on the part of Junius, that the masqued writer was a very great man, some leading statesman, it mortified him, and threw a coloring of the burlesque upon the aristocratic airs of Junius, to suppose him, after all, no more than a clerk in the War-Office. These are the common reasons for the non-satisfaction (dissatisfaction it cannot be called) of most men with the case as it stands in popular repute. But there is a *fourth* reason, stronger than all the rest, which weighs much with many even of those who have some personal acquaintance with the evidence, and (so far as that acquaintance goes) are not dissatisfied with its force. It is this, and I have once stated it at length in a private letter to Mr. Taylor; and singular enough, it will be thought, that this objection to the evidence turns out, when probed, its very strongest confirmation. Thus it stands:—

People allege that Sir Philip Francis was a vain man, fond of notoriety, and, beyond all things, fond of literary notoriety; and yet he never unmasked himself as Junius, never hinted at any interest which he had in these thrice celebrated letters; and, at length, when the claim is made on his behalf by a stranger, he not only does not come forward to countersign this claim as authentic, but absolutely, with some sternness, appears to disavow it. How is this? Here lies a glittering trophy; a derelict, exposed in the public highway. People have been known to violate their consciences, under the most awful circumstances, in order to establish a false pretension to it; people have actually died with a falsehood on their lips, for the poor chance of gaining what, for *them*, could be no more than a posthumous reputation; and this to be enjoyed even in its visionary foretaste, only for a few

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fleeting moments of life, with a certainty of present guilt, and at the hazard of future exposure. All this has been done by those who are conscious of having only a false claim. And here is the man who, by the supposition, has the true claim; a man, too, eminently vain-glorious; and yet *he* will not put forth his hand to appropriate the prize; nay, positively rejects it. Such is the objection. Now, hear the answer:—First, he did *not* reject it. The place in which he is supposed to have done so, is a short letter addressed to Sir Richard Phillips, by way of answer to a very impertinent demand, on that worthy publisher's part, for a categorical answer to the question — *Was he, or was he not, Junius?* Now, Sir Philip *seems* to say — 'No:' and he certainly framed his letter with a view to be so understood. But, on a nicer inspection of this answer, we may perceive that it is most jesuitically adapted to convey an impression at variance with the strict construction which lurks in the literal wording. Even that artifice, however, lets us behind the scenes, by showing that Sir Philip had a masqued design before him — a design to evade an acknowledgment which, in conscience, he could not boldly and blankly refute, and which, by vanity, he longed to establish. Yet, had this been otherwise, had he even pointedly and unambiguously said *No*, we could not, in the circumstances of the case, have built much upon *that*. For we know, and Sir Philip knew, what had been Dr. Johnson's casuistry, applied to this very case of Junius. Burke having been named, improbably enough, as Junius, the Doctor said 'No:' he acquitted Burke altogether; not because he had disowned the authorship; for *that* he had a right to do, even if really Junius; since, if veracity could be supposed any duty in such a case, then it was idle, from the first, to assume a masque; a masque that would be at the

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mercy of the first person who chose to go beyond others in impertinence. Surely impertinence ought to create no special right over another man's secret. And, therefore, along with the disguise, any sensible man must be presumed to take up the privilege of saying '*No*,' as one essential accessory and adjunct to that disguise. But, argued Johnson, Burke *volunteered* the disavowal; made it spontaneously, when nobody questioned him. Being, therefore, not called on for this as a measure of defence, on that ground, I hold him to have spoken the truth in disavowing Junius. This defence of a prudential untruth, in a case supposed, was well known to Francis. Armed with this authoritative sanction, Sir Philip — a mere lax man of the world — would readily have resorted to a falsehood, even in a case no stronger than Dr. Johnson's casuistry supposed. But, in fact, as we shall see, *his* was a great deal stronger; so that, *a fortiori*, he had the doctor's permission to make the boldest denial; and such a denial we should, in such a case, be entitled to hold as none at all. And yet, after all, he only allows himself an *apparent* denial; one which depends, for its effect, upon the haste and inaccuracy of the reader.

What then was the case of Sir Philip, which I affirm to be so much stronger than that which had been contemplated by Dr. Johnson, as a case justifying a denial of the truth? It was this: *Sir Philip Francis was* the creature *of Junius*. Whatever Sir Philip had — his wealth, his honors, his consideration, were owing to the letters of Junius; to the power which he had obtained under that signature; and to the mode in which, having obtained power like a thief, he had sold it like a traitor. Armed with that potent spell, he had made himself, first, formidable to the King and to his Cabinet; secondly, had brought himself, when thus armed, into the market for

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sale. But how? By what means? I answer: By the blackest treachery; by a double treachery; by treachery, as respected the way in which he rose into Junius; and by an equal treachery to his own principles, *as* Junius, in his mode of laying down that character. How is it, do we suppose, that Junius had won the national ear? Not by the means (generally presumed) of fine composition. No: but by the reputation he enjoyed of having won the ear of the King's government. And he had so: it was no false reputation. But again I say, in this case also, How? If the public could be won by such tinkling music, is any man childish enough to suppose that the care-laden Ministers of a great nation, overwhelmed by business, would find leisure to read *Cato* or *Publicola*, purely for the value of their style or their tropes? No: the true cause was, that Ministers found, in these letters, proofs of some enemy, some spy, being amongst them. Did *they* join the popular cry—'Here is a great rhetorician?' Never believe it; but, 'Here is a great thief.' Not the eloquence, but the larceny moved *their* anxieties. State secrets were betrayed. Francis was the spy. He picked Lord Barrington's locks: he practised daily as an eavesdropper upon Lord Barrington's private communications with Ministers: he abused, for his own purposes, the information, select and secret, which often came before him officially, in his character of clerk at the War-Office. In short, he was an unfaithful servant, who, first of all, built himself up into terror and power as Junius, on a thorough-going plan of disloyalty to his patron, and afterwards built himself up into the Right Honorable Sir Philip Francis, Knight of the Bath, Privy Counsellor, one of the Supreme Council in Bengal, with £12,000 per annum; all this upon a disloyalty equally deliberate to all the principles and the patriotism which he had professed as

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Junius. The first perfidy would only have put a gay feather into his cap; this he improved into a second, which brought him place, honor, 'troops of friends,' this world's wealth, in short, and every mode of prosperity but one; which one was peace of mind and an unclouded conscience. Such was the brief abstract of Sir Philip's history. Now, though most men would *not*, yet there were still surviving very many who *would*, upon any direct avowal that he was Junius, at once put 'this' and 'that' together, and, in one moment of time, come to unlock what had always been something of a mystery to Mr. Francis' friends at home — viz., how it was that he, the obscure clerk of the War-Office, notoriously upon bad terms with Lord Barrington, his principal, had, nevertheless, shot up all at once into a powerful Oriental satrap. The steps, the missing gradation, would suddenly be recovered, and connected into a whole. 'Thou hast it, Cawdor!' The metamorphosis of Francis into the Bengal potentate was unintelligible: but the intermediation of Junius would harmonize all difficulties. Thus grew Francis the clerk into Junius, (viz., by treason.) Thus grew Junius the demagogue into Francis the Rajah, viz., by selling his treason. '*You are Junius?*' it would be said: '*Why then, you are a very brilliant fellow.*' That would be the first reflection; but then would come a second on the heels of *that:* — '*And a most unprincipled knave, who rose into great consideration by filching his master's secrets.*'

Here, then, we read the true secret of his chicanery in replying to Sir R. Phillips. Had he been thoroughly determined to disavow Junius, could he have brought his heart to do so, we may be sure that he would not have needed (Junius would have known how to find clear language) to speak so obscurely as he *has* done in this

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short reply. Neither would he have contented himself with any simple denial; he would have recited some facts in his life circumstantiating his denial. But this was not in his power to do; nor did he sincerely wish it. Naturally he must have clung, with a perfect rapture of vanity, to his own too famous production. Respect for his own character forbade him to avow it. Parental vanity forbade him so to disavow it, as that he could never have reclaimed it. Sir Philip Francis had been a great criminal; but his crime produced its own intolerable punishment. The tantalization of his heart when denied the privilege, open to every other human being, of claiming the products of his own brain and of his own excessive * labor, must have been a perpetual martyrdom. And, in this statement of the case, we read a natural solution of two else inexplicable facts: first, why Sir P. Francis (supposing him Junius) did not come forward to claim his work. And, secondly, why Junius, the mysterious Junius, *old* '*Nominis umbra*,' (supposing him Francis,) did not come forward to proclaim his own name. To presume Francis and Junius one and the same person, at once explains both mysteries. Upon the Taylorian hypothesis, all is made clear as daylight why Junius did not avow his name — why Francis did not claim his literary honors. Upon such an account only is it possible to explain the case. All other accounts leave it a perpetual mystery, unfathomable upon any principles of human nature, why Junius did not, at least, make his claim by means of some last will and testament. We cannot imagine that a writer, evidently under

* '*His own excessive labor:*' — 'Is there no labor in these letters?' asks Junius, in a tone of triumphant appeal. And, on other occasions, he insists upon the vast toil which the composition cost him.

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the most intense worldly influences of vain-glory and ambition, should voluntarily have made a sacrifice (and a sacrifice with no apparent motive) of what, in the pardonable exaggeration of an author's vanity, must, to him, have appeared one of the greatest works in political as also in rhetorical literature. Such an act of austere self-mortification is inconceivable, except amongst the most rapturous devotees of the Romish church: shame only or fear* can avail to solve the enigma. But fear, if at all admitted as applicable to the case, could not extend beyond his own term of life: that motive cannot explain the silence of his last will and testament. There, at least, he would have spoken out to posterity, and his own surviving compatriots. 'If I live,' says he, in his Dedication to the People of England, 'you shall often hear of me.' And, doubtless, even in dying, if he forgot *them*, he would remember himself and his own really memorable pretensions. He would not forget, at least, to order some inscription on his own grave, pointing backwards to the gay trophies of him who had extorted fear from kings, and admiration from angry senates.† This he would have done: this he has not done; and a principle of shame only, operating in the way I have mentioned, is a case capable of explaining it. That case is precisely the case of Sir Philip Francis.

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* '*Fear:*'—'Sir William would meet me in the field: others would assassinate.'—*Junius to Sir Wm. Draper.*

† '*He would not have forgotten, at least, to order some inscription on his own grave,*' &c. Accordingly, there is in *The Anti-Jacobin Review*, a story told of a stranger dying at a village inn, somewhere, I think, in Buckinghamshire, and directing that no memorial should be placed upon his grave, beyond the initial letters of his name, and the motto of Junius, '*Stat nominis umbra.*' So much weight was attached to the story, that Charles Fox is said to have visited his grave. Probably the whole is a fiction.

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It remains only to say, that, by neglecting to press these facts and their natural construction against Sir Philip, Mr. Taylor allowed the only powerful argument against his hypothesis to stand unanswered. A motive of kindness towards the unhappy Sir Philip himself, and consideration for the pious feelings of his son and daughter, may have influenced Mr. Taylor in this forbearance. All are now dead; and these restraints can operate no longer. But even in the lifetime of the parties, surely enough might have been hinted to maintain the impregnability of the hypothesis, without seriously wounding the sensibilities of Sir Philip. These sensibilities merited respect; inasmuch as, though pointing to a past chapter of deep criminality, it is not impossible that they had long connected themselves with virtuous feelings of remorse, and a suffering sense of honor: most assuredly they brought along with them the bitterest chastisement, by that unexampled self-sacrifice which they entailed. But all this might have been met and faced by Mr. Taylor: the reader might have been summoned in general terms, before allowing an unnecessary weight to the fact of Sir Philip's *apparent* renunciation of the claim made on his behalf, to consider two capital points; first, whether he really *had* renounced it, and in such terms as admitted of no equivocal construction: secondly, whether (even supposing him to have done this in the amplest sense, and with no sort of reserve) there might not appear some circumstances in the past recital of Sir Philip's connection with the War-Office and Lord Barrington, which would forcibly restrain him in old age, when clothed with high state characters, of senator and privy counsellor, invested therefore with grave obligations of duty; I say, restrain him from seeming, by thus assuming the imputed author-

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ship, to assume, along with it, the responsibility attaching to certain breaches of confidence, which the temptations of ambition, and the ardor of partizanship, might palliate in a young man, but which it would not become an old one to adopt and own, under any palliations whatever, or upon any temptations of literary gain. Such an appeal as this could not greatly have distressed Sir Philip Francis, or not more, however, than he had already been distressed by the inevitable disclosures of the investigation itself, as connected with the capital thesis of Mr. Taylor, that Francis and Junius were the self-same person.

Here, therefore, was a great oversight of Mr. Taylor; and over the results of this oversight — his discoveries — the unconquerable points of his exposure have not yet established their victory. I may mention, however, that Sir Philip so far dallied with the gratification offered to his vanity in this public association of his name with Junius as to call upon Mr. Taylor. His visit seemed partly a sort of tentative measure, adopted in a spirit of double uncertainty — uncertainty about the exact quantity of proof that Mr. Taylor might have accumulated; and uncertainty again, about the exact temper of mind in which it became him to receive the new discoveries. He affected to be surprised that anybody should ever have thought of him in connection with Junius. Now, possibly, this was a mere careless expression, uttered simply by way of an introduction to the subsequent conversation. Else, and if it were said deliberately, it showed great weakness; for, assuredly, Sir Philip was too much a man of shrewd sagacity to fail in perceiving that, were it even possible for presumptions, so many and so strong, to be, after all, compatible with final falsehood, still a case had been made out far too strong for any man unaffectedly to

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pretend surprise at its winning some *primâ facie* credit. Mr. Taylor naturally declined re-arguing the case; he resigned it to its own merits, which must soon dispose of it in public estimation, but at the same time protested against having viewed his discovery in any other light than that of honor to Sir Philip; indeed, in a literary sense, who would *not* be honored (he asked) by the imputation of being Junius? So closed the conversation substantially on the respondent's part. But the appellant, Sir Philip, gave a singular turn to *his* part, which thus far had been rather to him a tone of expostulation, by saying in conclusion —

'Well, at least, I think, you can do no less than send me a copy of your book.'

This, of course, was done; and, with some slight interchange of civilities attending the transmission of the book, I believe the intercourse terminated.

Sir Philip suffered under a most cruel disease, which soon put an end to his troubled life; and my own belief is, that there ended as agitated an existence as can have been supported by frail humanity. He was naturally a man of bad and harsh disposition: insolent, arrogant, and ill-tempered. Constitutionally, he was irritable; bodily sufferings had exasperated the infirmities of his temper; and the mixed agony of body and mind in which he passed his latter years, must have been fearful even to contemplate. The Letters of Junius certainly show very little variety or extent of thought; no comprehensive grasp; no principles of any kind, false or sound; no powers, in fact, beyond the powers of sarcasm; but they have that sort of modulated rhythm, and that air of classical chastity, (perhaps arising more from the penury of ornament, and the absence of any impassioned eloquence, than from any positive causes,) which, co-operating with

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the shortness of the periods, and the unparalleled felicity of their sarcasms, would, at any rate, have conciliated the public notice. They have exactly that sort of talent which the owner is sure to overrate. But the intensity, the sudden growth, and the durability * of their fame, were due, (as I must ever contend,) not to any qualities of style or composition — though, doubtless, these it is which co-operated with the thick cloak of mystery, to sustain a reputation once gained — but to the knowledge dispersed through London society, that the Government had been appalled by Junius, as one who, in some way or other, had possessed himself of their secrets.

The London Magazine, of whose two publishers (editors also) I have thus introduced to the reader that one who had also distinguished himself as an author, was at that time brilliantly supported. And strange it is, and also has been to others as well as myself, that such a work should not have prospered; but prosper it did not. Meantime, the following writers were, in 1821-2-3, amongst my own *collaborateurs*: — Charles Lamb; Hazlitt; Allan Cunningham; Hood; Hamilton Reynolds; Carey, the unrivalled translator of Dante; Crow, the Public Orator of Oxford. And so well were all departments provided for, that even the monthly abstract of politics, brief as it necessarily was, had been confided to the care of Phillips, the celebrated Irish barrister. Certainly a literary *Pleiad* might have been gathered out of the stars connected with this journal; and others there were, I believe, occasional con-

* '*The durability*,' &c. It is, however, remarkable that, since the great expansion of the public mind by political discussions consequent upon the Reform Bill, Junius is no longer found a salable book: so, at least, I have heard from various persons.

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tributors, who could not be absolutely counted upon, and therefore I do not mention them. One, however, who joined *The London* in 1823, I think, calls for a separate mention — namely, Clare, the peasant poet of Northamptonshire.

Our Scottish brethren are rather too apt, in the excess of that nationality, (which, dying away in some classes, is still burning fervently in others,) and which, though giving a just right of complaint to those who suffer by it, and though direfully disfiguring the liberality of the national manners, yet stimulates the national rivalship usefully; — our Scottish brethren, I say, are rather too apt to talk as if, in Scotland only, there were any precedents to be found of intellectual merit struggling upwards in the class of rustic poverty. Whereas there has, in England, been a larger succession of such persons than in Scotland. Inquire, for instance, as to the proportion of those who have risen to distinction by mere weight of unassisted merit, in this present generation, at the English bar; and then inquire as to the corresponding proportion at the Scotch bar. Oftentimes it happens that, in the poetry of this class, little more is found than the gift of a tolerable good ear for managing the common metres of the language. But in Clare it was otherwise. His poems were not the mere reflexes of his reading. He had studied for himself in the fields, and in the woods, and by the side of brooks. I very much doubt if there could be found, in his poems, a single commonplace image, or a description made up of hackneyed elements. In that respect, his poems are original, and have even a separate value, as a sort of calendar (in extent, of course, a very limited one) of many rural appearances, of incidents in the fields not elsewhere noticed, and of the loveliest flowers most felicitously described. The description is often true even to a

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botanical eye ; and in that, perhaps, lies the chief defect ; not properly in the scientific accuracy, but that, in searching after this too earnestly, the feeling is sometimes too much neglected. However, taken as a whole, his poems have a very novel quality of merit, though a quality too little, I fear, in the way of public notice. Messrs. Taylor & Hessey had been very kind to him ; and, through them, the late Lord Fitzwilliam had settled an annuity upon him. In reality, the annuity had been so far increased, I believe, by the publishers, as to release him from the necessities of daily toil. He had thus his time at his own command ; and, in 1824, perhaps upon some literary scheme, he came up to London, where, by a few noble families and by his liberal publishers, he was welcomed in a way that, I fear, from all I heard, would but too much embitter the contrast with his own humble opportunities of enjoyment in the country. The contrast of Lord Radstock's brilliant parties, and the glittering theatres of London, would have but a poor effect in training him to bear that want of excitement which even already, I had heard, made his rural life but too insupportable to his mind. It is singular that what most fascinated his rustic English eye, was not the gorgeous display of English beauty, but the French style of beauty as he saw it amongst the French actresses in Tottenham Court Road. He seemed, however, oppressed by the glare and tumultuous existence of London ; and being ill at the time, from an affection of the liver, which did not, of course, tend to improve his spirits, he threw a weight of languor upon any attempt to draw him out into conversation. One thing, meantime, was very honorable to him, that even in this season of dejection, he would uniformly become animated when anybody spoke to him of Wordsworth — animated with the most hearty and almost rap-

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turous spirit of admiration. As regarded his own poems, this admiration seemed to have an unhappy effect of depressing his confidence in himself. It is unfortunate, indeed, to gaze too closely upon models of colossal excellence. Compared with those of his own class, I feel satisfied that Clare will always maintain an honorable place.

Very different, though originally in the very same class of rustic laborers and rustic poets, (a fact which I need not disguise, since he proclaims it himself upon every occasion with a well-directed pride,) is another of that London society in 1821–23, viz., Allan Cunningham. About this author I had a special interest. I had read, and with much pleasure, a volume called 'Nithisdale and Galloway Song," which professed to contain fugitive poems of that country, gathered together by Mr. Cromek, the engraver; the same person, I believe, who published a supplementary volume to Dr. Currie's edition of Burns. The whole of these, I had heard, were a forgery by Allan Cunningham; and one, at any rate, was so — by far the most exquisite gem in the volume. It was a fragment of only three stanzas; and the situation must be supposed that of a child lying in a forest amongst the snow, just at the point of death. The child must be supposed to speak:

'Gone were but the cold,
And gone were but the snow,
I could sleep in the wild woods,
Where the primroses blow.

'Cold's the snow at my head,
And cold's the snow at my feet;
And the finger of death's at my eyes;
Closing them to sleep.

'Let none tell my father,
Or my mother so dear;
I'll meet them both in heaven,
At the spring-time of the year.'

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These lines of Allan Cunningham (so I call him, for so he called himself upon his visiting cards) had appeared to me so exquisite a breathing of the pastoral muse, that, had it been for these alone, I should have desired to make his acquaintance. But I had also read some papers on gipsy life, embodying several striking gipsy traditions, by the same author. These were published in early numbers of *Blackwood's Magazine;* and had, apparently, introduced situations, and scenes, and incidents, from the *personal* recollections of the author. Such was my belief, at least. In parts, they were impressively executed: and a singular contrast they afforded to the situation and daily life of the same Allan, planted and rooted, as it were, amongst London scenery. Allan was — (what shall I say? To a man of genius, I would not apply the coarse mercantile term of foreman; and the fact is, that he stood on a more confidential footing than is implied by that term, with his employer) — he was then a sort of right-hand man, an agent equally for mechanical and for intellectual purposes, to Chantrey the sculptor: he was an agent, also, in transactions not strictly either the one or the other; cases which may be called, therefore, mechanico-intellectual; or, according to a pleasant distinction of Professor Wilson's, he was an agent for the 'coarse' arts as well as the 'fine' arts; sometimes in separation, sometimes in union. This I mention, as arguing the versatility of his powers: few men beside himself could have filled a station running through so large a scale of duties. Accordingly, he measured out and apportioned each day's work to the several working sculptors in Chantrey's yard: this was the most mechanical part of his services. On the other hand, at the opposite pole of his functions, he was often (I believe) found useful to

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Chantrey as an umpire in questions of taste, or, perhaps, as a suggester of original hints, in the very highest walks of the art. Various indications of natural disposition for these efforts, aided greatly, and unfolded by daily conversation with all the artists and amateurs resorting to Chantrey's *studio*, will be found in his popular 'Lives of the Painters and Sculptors.' His particular opinions are, doubtless, often liable to question; but they show proof everywhere of active and *sincere* thinking: and, in two of his leading peculiarities, upon questions of *æsthetics*, (to speak *Germanice*,) I felt too close an approach in Cunningham to opinions which I had always entertained myself, not to have been prejudiced very favorably in his behalf. They were these: — He avowed an unqualified scorn of Ossian; such a scorn as every man that ever looked at Nature with his own eyes, and not through books, must secretly entertain. Heavens! what poverty: secondly, what monotony: thirdly, what falsehood of imagery! Scorn, therefore, he avowed of Ossian; and, in the next place, scorn of the insipidities — when applied to the plastic arts, (sculpture or painting) — embalmed by modern allegory. Britannia, supported by Peace on one side and Prosperity on the other, beckons to Inoculation — 'Heavenly maid' — and to Vaccination in the rear, who, mounted upon the car of Liberality, hurls her spear at the dragon of Small-Pox-Hospitalism, &c. &c. But why quote instances of that which every stone-cutter's yard supplies in nauseous prodigality? These singularities of taste, at least, speaking of Ossian,* (for, as to

* With respect to Ossian, I have heard it urged, by way of an *argumentum ad hominem*, in arguing the case with myself, as a known devotee of Wordsworth, that he, Wordsworth, had professed honor for Ossian, by writing an epitaph for his supposed grave in *Glen Almain*. By no means: Wordsworth's fine lines are not upon the pseudo-Ossian of

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allegory, it is rather tolerated by the public mind than positively approved,) plead thus far in any man's favor, that they argue a healthy sincerity of the sensibilities, not liable to be duped by the vague, the superficial, or the unreal; nor, finally, by precedent and authority.

Such were the grounds upon which I looked forward, with some pleasure, to my first interview with Allan Cunningham. This took place at a dinner given by my publishers, soon after the publication of the Opium Confessions; at which dinner, to say the truth, I soon after suspected (and with some vexation) that I had myself, unconsciously, played the part of lion. At that time I was ill, beyond what any man would believe, who saw me out of bed: and, in the mere facility of unreflecting good nature, I had consented to attend, on the assurance that 'only a friend or two' would be present. However, it proved to be a general gathering, 'frequent and full,' of all the wits, keen and brilliant, associated in the literary journal to which I had committed my earliest experiences. Dinner was fixed at '*half-past five, for six;*' and, from some mistake, it happened that I was amongst the earliest arrivals. As an invalid, or, as the hero of the day, I was planted inexorably, without retreat, in the place of honor by the fireside; for the month was deep November. Judge of my despair, when there began to file in one suspicious-looking fellow after another — (*suspicious* to me at that moment; because, by the expression of the eye, looking all made up for 'play,' and some of them for 'mischief') — one after another, I say; annunciation upon annunciation suc-

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Macpherson, not upon the cataphysical one-stringed lutanist of Morven, but upon Ossian, the hero and the poet, of Gælic tradition. We scorn the Ossian of 1766. No man scorns Ossian the son of Fingal of A. D. 366.

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ceeded with frightful rapidity, until the small back drawing-room of our host began to overflow. I believe the fashion of *not* introducing dinner visiters to each other was just then (1821) beginning to be popular: either for that reason, or not to overwhelm my weak spirits, I was not often summoned to this ceremony: but, on two or three more select arrivals, I *was:* in such cases I had to stand formal presentation to the parties. One of these was Mr. (no, he will be as angry as O'Gorman Mahon or The Chisholm, if I say *Mr.*) Allan Cunningham; and, from the light of a November fire, I first saw reflected the dark flashing guerilla eye of Allan Cunningham. Dark it was, and deep with meaning; and the meaning, as in all cases of expressive eyes, was comprehensive, and, therefore, equivocal. On the whole, however, Allan Cunningham's expression did not belie his character, as afterwards made known to me: he was kind, liberal, hospitable, friendly; and his whole natural disposition, as opposed to his acquired, was genial and fervent. But he had acquired feelings in which I, as an Englishman, was interested painfully. In particular, like so many Scotsmen of *his* original rank, he had a prejudice — or, perhaps, that is not the word: it was no feeling that he had derived from experience — it was an old Scottish grudge: not a feeling that he indulged to his own private sensibilities, but to his *national* conscience — a prejudice against Englishmen. He loved, perhaps, this and that Englishman, Tom and Jack; but he hated us English as a body: it was in vain to deny it. As is the master, such is the company; and too often, in the kind and hospitable receptions of Allan Cunningham and Mrs. Cunningham, or other Scottish families residing in London, I heard, not from the heads of the house, but from the visiters, rueful attacks upon us poor English, and,

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above all, upon us poor Oxonians. Oxford received no mercy. O heavens! how my fingers itched to be amidst the row! Yet, oftentimes I had no pretext for intermixing in the dispute — if dispute it could be called, where, generally speaking, all were of one mind.

The fact is this: — Far be it from me to say anything of Mr. Allan Cunningham's original rank, had he not taken a pride (and a meritorious pride) in asserting it himself. Now, that granted, all is plain. The Scotch, (or, to please the fancy of our Transtweedian brethren, the Scots,*) in the lower orders of society, do not love the English. Much I could say on this subject, having lived in Scotland for six or seven years, and observed closely. The Scotch often plead that the English retaliate this dislike, and that no love is lost. I think otherwise; and, for the present, I will only report my experience on last Sunday night but one, January 28, 1838, in a coffee-room of Edinburgh. I refer to a day so recent, in order that the reader may understand how little I wish to rest upon any *selected* case: the chance case which happens to stand last in one's experience may be presumed to be a fair average case. Now, upon that evening, two gentlemen were sitting in a box together; one of them an Englishman, one a Scotchman. High argument reigned between them. The Englishman alleged much and weighty matter, if it had been true, violently and harshly against the Scotch: the Scotchman replied firmly, but not warmly: the Englishman rejoined with fierceness; both, at length, rose in a state of irritation, and went to the fire. As they went, the Scotchman offered his card. The Englishman took it; and, without so much as looking at it, stuffed it into

* It is remarkable that, for what mysterious reason I never could discover, thorough *Scotchmen* feel exceedingly angry at being so called; and demand, for some cabilistical cause, to be entitled *Scotsmen*.

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the fire. Upon this, up started *six* gentlemen in a neighboring box, exclaiming to the *soi-disant* Englishman —'Sir, you are a disgrace to your country!' and oftentimes giving him to understand that, in their belief, he was *not* an Englishman. Afterwards, the quarrel advanced: the Englishman throwing off his coat, or making motions to do so, challenged the Scotchman to a pugilistic combat. The Scotchman, who appeared thoroughly cool, and determined not to be provoked, persisted in his original determination of meeting his antagonist with pistols, were it on the next morning; but steadily declined to fight on the coarse terms proposed. And thus the quarrel threatened to prove interminable. But how, meantime, did the neutral part of the company (all, by accident, Englishmen) conduct themselves towards their own countryman? Him they justly viewed as the unprovoked aggressor, and as the calumniator of Scotland, in a way that no provocation could have justified. One and all, they rose at length; declared the conduct of their countryman insufferable; and two or three of them, separately, offered their cards, as willing to meet him either on the next morning, or any morning when his convenience might allow, by way of evading any personal objection he might plead to his original challenger. The Englishman (possibly * a Scotchman) peremptorily declined all challenges.

'What! six or seven upon one?'

'Oh no, sir!' the answer was; 'not so: amongst Eng-

* '*Possibly a Scotchman*,' and very probably; for there are no more bitter enemies of Scotland and Scotchmen, and all things Scotch, than banished Scotchmen — who may be called renegade Scotchmen. There is no enemy like an old friend; and many a Scotchman (or Scotsman — let us not forget *that*) remembers Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, simply as the city that ejected him.

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lishmen, if you *are* one, you must be well aware that no man meets with foul play: any one of ourselves would protect you against the man that should offer less than fair play to yourself.'

The libeller, however, intrenched himself in his determination to hear of no pistol warfare; and hence, though two of the Englishmen were of colossal build, and well able to have smashed his pugilistic pretensions, yet, as all but himself were opposed to that mode of fighting, he, in fact, took shelter under his own limited mode of offering satisfaction. The others would not fight as he, nor he as they; and thus all openings being closed to any honorable mode of settling the dispute, at the request of the company, the master of the coffee-room, with his long 'tail' of waiters, advanced to him with a quiet demeanor, but with words so persuasive as induced him quietly to withdraw. And so terminated the dispute.

And now, let me ask, Is an Englishman likely to meet with six Scotchmen, in London, starting up on behalf of calumniated England? O, no; painful it is to tell of men whom we, English, view as our brothers, and whose land, and institutions, and literature, have, in our days, been the subject of an absolute '*craze*,' or, at all events, of a most generous enthusiasm in England, that nineteen out of twenty, among those who are of humble birth and connections, are but too ready to join fervently in abuse of the land which shelters them, and supports their household charities. Scotchmen, you cannot deny it. Now, you hear from my story, which is not a fortnight old, how different, in the same circumstances, is the conduct of Englishmen. *All*, observe, joined, with one consent, in the same service — and there were six, without counting myself, who did not belong to either party; and not one of my countrymen stirred upon any principle of selfish

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honor; none had been wounded; but upon a generous regard to the outraged character of a country which at that moment was affording a shelter to themselves, which they loved and honored, and which was accidentally without a defender.

Would that, upon such an impulse, I could have heard Allan Cunningham undertaking the defence of England or of Englishmen! But this I have *not* heard from any Scotchman, excepting only Professor Wilson; and he, to show the natural result of such generosity, is taxed with Anglomania by many of his countrymen. Allan Cunningham offended somewhat in this point, not so much in *act*, as by discovering his propensities. I, for my part, quarrelled also with his too oriental prostrations before certain regular authors — chiefly Sir Walter Scott and Southey. With respect to *them*, he professed to feel himself nobody, in a way which no large estimater of things as they are — of natural gifts, and their infinite distribution through an infinite scale of degrees, and the compensating accomplishments which take place in so vast a variety of forms — could easily tolerate. Allan Cunningham would say — 'I don't think myself worthy to be accounted an author in comparison of such men;' and this he would say, in a tone that too much had the sound of including, in his act of prostration, his hearer at the moment; who might very possibly disdain so absolute and unlimited an avowal of inferiority — a Chinese *kotou* so unconditional; knowing, as know he must, that if in one talent or one accomplishment he were much inferior, hopelessly inferior, not the less in some other power, some other talent, some other accomplishment, he might have a right to hold himself greatly superior; nay, might have a right to say — that power I possess in some degree; and Sir Walter Scott or Mr. Southey in no

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degree whatever. For example: *every* mode of philosophic power was denied to both of these authors; so that he who had that power, in *any* degree, might reasonably demur to this prostration, performed before their images. With respect to Sir Walter Scott, in particular, the homage of Allan Cunningham was the less merited, as Sir Walter had not treated *him* with the respect due to a man of so much original genius: the aristocratic phrase, 'honest Allan,' expressed little of the courtesy due from one man of letters to another. And, in the meantime, whilst Allan Cunningham was thus ready to humble himself before a countryman of his own, who had not treated him, in public, with the proper consideration, he spoke of Wordsworth [but certainly with this excuse — that, in those days, he knew nothing at all of his works] with something like contempt: in fact, he had evidently adopted the faith of the wretched journals. This alienated my feelings from Cunningham, spite of his own kind and liberal nature; nay, spite of his own natural genius.

One — opinion shall I call it, fancy, or dream — of Allan Cunningham's, is singular enough to deserve mention: he maintained that the Scottish musical airs must have an eternal foundation in nature; that is to say, must have a co-eternal existence with the musical sense, for the following most extraordinary reason; nay, considering that his veracity was unimpeachable, I may say marvellous reason: namely, that he, Cunningham, had, without any previous knowledge of these airs, invented all or most of them *proprio marte;* so that, like the archetypal ideas in some systems of philosophers, one might affirm, upon his representation of things, that Scottish airs were eternally present to the ear of the Demiurgus, and eternally producing themselves afresh.

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This seemed fanciful, if not extravagant; and one, at least, of Cunningham's works — that which relates to Robert Bruce — is also extravagant in an outrageous degree. And, by the way, on that ground, I should have guessed him to be a man of genius, were there even no other ground; for no man but a man of genius, and with the inequality of genius, can, in one state of mind, write beautifully, and, in another, write the merest extravagance; nay, (with Cunningham's cordial assent, I presume, that I may say,) awful extravagance. Meantime, in practical life, Cunningham was anything but extravagant: he was, (as I have said,) in a high intellectual sense, and in the merest mechanical sense, the right-hand man of Chantrey, whom, by the way, he always spoke of with the highest and evidently the sincerest respect: he was his right-hand man, also, in a middle sense, or, as I have said, a mechanico-intellectual way. For example, he purchased all the marble for Chantrey; which might require, perhaps, mixed qualifications: he distributed the daily labors of the workmen; which must have required such as were purely mechanic. He transacted, also, all the negotiations for choosing the site of monuments to be erected in Westminster Abbey; a commission which might frequently demand some diplomatic address in the conduct of the negotiations with the Abbey authorities; a function of his duties which chiefly regarded the interest of his principal, Sir Francis Chantrey, as also a just eye for the effect of a monument, combined with a judicious calculation of the chances it had, at one point rather than another, for catching the public notice: this latter function of his complex office, regarding mainly the interests of the defunct persons or his relations, and those of Chantrey, only in a secondary way.

This aspect of Cunningham's official or ministerial life,

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reminds me, by the way, of the worst aspect under which his nationality or civic illiberality revealed itself; an illiberality which here took the shape of bigotry. A Scotchman, or Scotsman, who happens to hate England, is sure *à fortiori*, to hate the English Church; which, on account of its surplice, its organs, its cathedrals, and its mitred prelates, he has been taught to consider as the sister of the Babylonian Rome. Strange, indeed, that the Scottish Church should have been the favorite church of the poor, which began so undeniably upon the incitement of the rich. They, the rich and the aristocratic, had revelled in the spoils of the monastic orders, at the dissolution of the Romish Church. Naturally unwilling to resign their booty, they promoted a church built upon a principle of poverty and humility: a church that would not seek to resume her plundered property. Under their political intrigues it was that all the contests arose in the seventeenth century: first, by slight prelusive efforts during the long reign of James the Sixth or First; and, secondly, by a determinate civil war in that of Charles the First and Second. But in this last case, the 'martyrs,' as they are called — those who fought at Drumclog, &c. — waiving all question of their real temper and religious merits, were, upon one single ground, incapable of founding a national church: they were too few: a small body, reckoned by hundreds, and not by thousands, never could pretend to represent the million of souls, or upwards, to which, even in those days, the Scottish nation amounted. What I maintain, therefore, is, that no matter how the Presbyterian Church came to have its legal establishment revived and ratified, it cannot be pretended, historically, that this establishment owed much to the struggles in Charles the Second's days, by which (so far as affected at all) it was injured. This church, dated from older times,

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went back to those times for sanction and for arguments of its conformity to the national taste; seeing that, in those elder times, it did really count upon the great majority of the nation as its affectionate and zealous supporters: whereas, in the Cameronian days, none but the very slenderest minority, and that minority, again, not numbering any people of weight or consideration for either property or intelligence or talent — no party of any known account — no party who were even nominally known to the people of Scotland — had chosen, at any crisis in the reign of the second Charles, to join these religious malcontents. Much more might be said with truth; but this may suffice — that the insurrectionary movements in Scotland, during that reign, were, relatively to the state and to the public peace of Scotland, pretty much the same as the rising in the cotton districts at the instigation of Edwards, in the year ——, to the general stability of the British government at that era. The Church of Scotland, therefore, does not, in fact, connect itself — for any part of the impulse to which it owes its birth, however in words or false pretences it may do so — with any of the movements, whether prosperous for the moment, or hopelessly ruinous, made about 1677 by the religious Whigs of Scotland. In fact, like the insurgent cotton spinners, these turbulent people were chiefly from the west. The 'Western' people they were then called, and the 'Westlanders' — so little were they at that time supposed to represent Scotland. Such is the truth of history. Nevertheless, in our insurrectionary days, (insurrectionary, I mean, by the character of the pretensions advanced — not by overt acts,) it has been a delightful doctrine to lay the foundations of the Scottish Kirk in rebellion; and hence the false importance assigned to the Cameronian insurgents. And hence

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partly it has happened, that Scottish nationality and hatred of England has peculiarly associated itself with the latter church history of Scotland; for, as to the earlier, and really important era of Scottish Church struggles with the civil power, the English were looked to as their brethren and effectual allies: and as the Scottish Church necessarily recalls to the mind the anti-pole of the English Church, thus also it has happened, that all symbols or exponents of the English Episcopal Church, are, to a low-born Scottish patriot, so many counter-symbols of his own national or patriotic prejudices.

Thus, or in some such way, it happened that Cunningham never showed his illiberality so strongly as with reference to his negotiations with Westminster Abbey. The 'rapacity' and 'avarice' of the Church of England is the open theme of his attacks in his paper upon Lord Byron's funeral; though, perhaps, he would find it hard to substantiate his charge. Notoriously the church, whether as Dean and Chapter, or as Collegiate Corporations, or as Episcopal Sees, has ever been found the most lenient of all masters under which to hold property; and it is not very probable that the church would suddenly change its character under a treaty with a popular artist.

However, if all his foibles or infirmities had been summed up, Allan Cunningham still remained a man to admire and love: and by comparison with those of his own order, men raised, that is to say, by force of genius, from the lowest rank, (the rank, in *his* case, of a working mason, as I have heard him declare,) his merits became best appreciable. The faults of men self-taught, (the *αὐτοδιδακτοι*,) and men self-raised, are almost proverbial. The vanity and inflation of heart, the egotism and arrogance of such men, were as alien from the character of Cunningham as of any man I ever knew; and, in

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other respects, he was no less advantageously distinguished from his order. Hogg, for instance, was absolutely insufferable in conversation. Egotism the most pertinacious might have been excused; but the matter of this egotism was so trivial and insane, seldom relating to any higher subject than a conflict with a 'sawmon,' that human patience could not weather the infliction. In Cunningham there was rarely an allusion to himself. Some people, it is true, might be annoyed by his too frequent allusions to his own personal strength and size, which he overrated; for they were not remarkable; or, if they had been, what does one man care about another man's qualities of person, this way or that, unless in so far as he may sometimes be called upon to describe them, in order to meet the curiosity of others. But Cunningham's allusions of this kind, though troublesome at times, seemed always jocose, and did not argue any shade of conceit. In more serious and natural subjects of vanity, he seemed to be as little troubled with any morbid self-esteem. And, in all other respects, Cunningham was a whole world above his own order of self-raised men — not less in gravity, sense, and manliness of thought, than in the dignified respectability of his conduct. He was rising an inch in the world every day of his life; for his whole day, from sunrise to bedtime, was dedicated to active duties cheerfully performed. And on this subject, one anecdote is memorable, and deserves a lasting record among the memorials of literary men. I have mentioned and described his station and its manifold duties, in relation to Sir Francis Chantrey. Now, he has told me himself repeatedly, and certainly, from my own observation and that of others, I have no doubt of his literal veracity, that, in the course of his whole connection with that eminent sculptor, he never

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borrowed one single hour from his ministerial labors on account of his principal, either to compose or to correct one of those many excellent, sometimes brilliant, pages, by which he has delighted so many thousands of readers, and won for himself a lasting name in the fine literature of modern England.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

LIBELLOUS ATTACK BY A LONDON JOURNAL.

This mention of Allan Cunningham recalls to my recollection an affair which retains one part of its interest to this day, arising out of the very important casuistical question which it involves. We Protestant nations are in the habit of treating casuistry as a field of speculation, false and baseless *per se;* nay, we regard it not so much in the light of a visionary and idle speculation, as one positively erroneous in its principles, and mischievous for its practical results. This is due in part to the disproportionate importance which the Church of Rome has always attached to casuistry; making, in fact, this supplementary section of ethics take precedency of its elementary doctrines in their Catholic simplicity: as though the plain and broad highway of morality were scarcely ever the safe road, but that every case of human conduct were to be treated as an exception, and never as lying within the universal rule: and thus forcing the simple, honest-minded Christian to travel upon a tortuous by-road, in which he could not advance a step in security without a spiritual guide at his elbow; and, in fact, whenever the hair-splitting casuistry is brought, with all its elaborate machinery, to bear upon the simplicities of household life, and upon the daily intercourse of the world, there it

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has the effect (and is expressly cherished by the Romish Church with a view to the effect) of raising the spiritual pastor into a sort of importance which corresponds to that of an attorney. The consulting casuist is, in fact, to all intents and purposes, a moral attorney. For, as the plainest man, with the most direct purposes, is yet reasonably afraid to trust himself to his own guidance in any affair connected with questions of law; so also, when taught to believe that an upright intention and good sense are equally insufficient in morals, as they are in law, to keep him from stumbling or from missing his road, he comes to regard a conscience-keeper as being no less indispensable for his daily life and conversation, than his legal agent, or his professional 'man of business,' for the safe management of his property, and for his guidance amongst the innumerable niceties which beset the real and inevitable intricacies of rights and duties, as they grow out of human enactments and a complex condition of society.

Fortunately for the happiness of human nature and its dignity, those holier rights and duties, which grow out of laws heavenly and divine, written by the finger of God upon the heart of every rational creature, are beset by no such intricacies, and require, therefore, no such vicarious agency for their practical assertion. The primal duties of life, like the primal charities, are placed high above us — legible to every eye, and shining like the stars, with a splendor that is read in every clime, and translates itself into every language at once. Such is the imagery of Wordsworth. But this is otherwise estimated in the policy of papal Rome; and casuistry usurps a place in her spiritual economy, to which our Protestant feelings demur. So far, however, the question between us and Rome is a question of degrees. They push casuistry into a general and unlimited application; we, if at all, into a very

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narrow one. But another difference there is between us even more important; for it regards no mere excess in the *quantity* of range allowed to casuistry, but in the *quality* of its speculations; and which it is (more than any other cause) that has degraded the office of casuistical learning amongst us. Questions are raised, problems are entertained, by the Romish casuistry, which too often offend against all purity and manliness of thinking. And that objection occurs forcibly here, which Southey (either in *The Quarterly Review* or in his 'Life of Wesley') has urged and expanded with regard to the Romish and also the Methodist practice of *auricular confession*, viz.— that, as it *is* practically managed, not leaving the person engaged in this act to confess according to the light of his own conscience, but at every moment interfering, on the part of the confessor, to suggest *leading questions* (as lawyers call them,) and to throw the light of confession upon parts of the experience which native modesty would leave in darkness,— so managed, the practice of confession is undoubtedly the most demoralizing practice known to any Christian society. Innocent young persons, whose thoughts would never have wandered out upon any impure images or suggestions, have their ingenuity and their curiosity sent roving upon unlawful quests; they are instructed to watch what else would pass undetained in the mind, and would pass unblamably, on the Miltonic principle: ('Evil into the mind of God or man may come unblamed,' &c.) Nay, which is worst of all, unconscious or semi-conscious thoughts and feelings or natural impulses, rising, like a breath of wind under some motion of nature, and again dying away, because not made the subject of artificial review and interpretation, are now brought powerfully under the focal light of the consciousness; and whatsoever is once made the subject of consciousness,

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can never again have the privilege of gay, careless thoughtlessness — the privilege by which the mind, like the lamps of a mail-coach, moving rapidly through the midnight woods, illuminate, for one instant, the foliage or sleeping umbrage of the thickets; and, in the next instant, have quitted them, to carry their radiance forward upon endless successions of objects. This happy privilege is forfeited for ever, when the pointed significancy of the confessor's questions, and the direct knowledge which he plants in the mind, have awakened a guilty familiarity with every form of impurity and unhallowed sensuality.

Here, then, are objections sound and deep, to casuistry, as managed in the Romish church. Every possible objection ever made to auricular confession applies with equal strength to casuistry; and some objections, besides these, are peculiar to itself. And yet, after all, these are but objections to casuistry as treated by a particular church. Casuistry in itself — casuistry as a possible, as a most useful, and a most interesting speculation — remains unaffected by any one of these objections; for none applies to the essence of the case, but only to its accidents, or separable adjuncts. Neither is this any curious or subtle observation of little practical value. The fact is as far otherwise as can be imagined — the defect to which I am here pointing, is one of the most clamorous importance. Of what value, let me ask, is Paley's Moral Philosophy? What is its imagined use? Is it that in substance it reveals any new duties, or banishes as false any old ones? No; but because the known and admitted duties — duties recognised in *every* system of ethics — are here placed (successfully or not) upon new foundations, or brought into relation with new principles not previously perceived to be in any relation whatever. This, in fact, is the very

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meaning of a theory * or contemplation, [Θεωρια,] when A, B, C, old and undisputed facts have their relations to each other developed. It is not, therefore, for any practical benefit in action, so much as for the satisfaction of the understanding, when reflecting on a man's own actions, the wish to see what his conscience or his heart prompts reconciled to general laws of thinking — this is the particular service performed by Paley's Moral Philosophy. It does not so much profess to tell *what* you are to do, as the *why* and the *wherefore;* and, in particular, to show how one rule of action may be reconciled to some other rule of equal authority, but which, apparently, is in hostility to the first. Such, then, is the utmost and highest aim of the Paleyian or the Ciceronian ethics, as they exist. Meantime, the grievous defect to which I have adverted above — a defect equally found in all systems of morality, from the Nichomachéan ethics of Aristotle downwards — is the want of a casuistry, by way of supplement to the main system, and, governed by the spirit of the very same

* No terms of art are used so arbitrarily, and with such perfect levity, as the terms *hypothesis, theory, system.* Most writers use one or other with the same indifference that they use in constructing the title of a novel, or, suppose, of a pamphlet, where the phrase *thoughts,* or *strictures,* or *considerations,* upon so and so, are used *ad libitum.* Meantime, the distinctions are essential. That is properly an *hypothesis* where the question is about a cause: certain phenomena are known and given: the object is to place below these phenomena a basis [ὑποθεσις] capable of supporting them, and accounting for them. Thus, if you were to assign a cause sufficient to account for the *aurora borealis,* that would be an hypothesis. But a theory, on the other hand, takes a multitude of facts all disjointed, or, at most, suspected, of some interdependency: these it takes and places under strict laws of relation to each other. But here there is no question of a cause. Finally, a system is the synthesis of a theory and an hypothesis: it states the relations as amongst an undigested mass, *rudis indigestaque moles,* of known phenomena; and it assigns a basis for the whole, as in an hypothesis. These distinctions would become vivid and convincing by the help of proper illustrations.

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laws, which the writer has previously employed in the main body of his work. And the immense superiority of this supplementary section, to the main body of the systems, would appear in this, that the latter, I have just been saying, aspires only to guide the reflecting judgment in harmonizing the different parts of his own conduct, so as to bring them under the same law; whereas the casuistical section, in the supplement, would seriously undertake to guide the conduct, in many doubtful cases, of action — cases which are so regarded by all thinking persons. Take, for example, the case which so often arises between master and servant, and in so many varieties of form — a case which requires you to decide between some violation of your conscience, on the one hand, as to veracity, by saying something that is not strictly true, as well as by evading (and that is often done) all answer to inquiries which you are unable to meet satisfactorily — a violation of your conscience to this extent, and in this way; or, on the other hand, a still more painful violation of your conscience in consigning deliberately some young woman — faulty, no doubt, and erring, but yet likely to derive a lesson from her own errors, and the risk to which they have exposed her — consigning her, I say, to ruin, by refusing her a character, and thus shutting the door upon all the paths by which she might retrace her steps. This I state as one amongst the many cases of conscience daily occurring in the common business of the world. It would surprise any reader to find how many they are; in fact, a very large volume might be easily collected of such cases as are of ordinary occurrence. *Casuistry*, the very word *casuistry* expresses the science which deals with such *cases:* for as a case, in the declension of a noun, means a falling away, or a deflection from the upright nominative, (*rectus*,) so a case in ethics implies

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some falling off, or deflection from the high road of catholic morality. Now, of all such cases, one, perhaps the most difficult to manage, the most intractable, whether for consistency of thinking as to the theory of morals, or for consistency of action as to the practice of morals, is the case of DUELLING.

As an introduction, I will state my story — the case for the casuist; and then say one word on the reason of the case.

First, let me report the case of a friend — a distinguished lawyer at the English bar. I had the circumstances from himself, which lie in a very small compass; and, as my friend is known, to a proverb almost, for his literal accuracy in all statements of fact, there need be no fear of any mistake as to the main points of the case. He was one day engaged in pleading before the Commissioners of Bankruptcy; a court then newly appointed, and differently constituted, I believe, in some respects, from its present form. That particular commissioner, as it happened, who presided at the moment when the case occurred, had been recently appointed, and did not know the faces of those who chiefly practised in the court. All things, indeed, concurred to favor his mistake: for the case itself came on in a shape or in a stage which was liable to misinterpretation, from the partial view which it allowed of the facts, under the hurry of the procedure; and my friend, also, unluckily, had neglected to assume his barrister's costume, so that he passed, in the commissioner's appreciation, as an attorney. 'What if he *had* been an attorney?' it may be said: 'was he, therefore, less entitled to courtesy or justice?' Certainly not; nor is it my business to apologize for the commissioner. But it may easily be imagined, and (making allowances for the confusion of hurry and imperfect knowledge of the

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case) it *does* offer something in palliation of the judge's rashness, that, amongst a large heap of 'Old Bailey' attorneys, who notoriously attended this court for the express purpose of whitewashing their clients, and who were in bad odor as tricksters, he could hardly have been expected to make a special exception in favor of one particular man, who had not protected himself by the insignia of his order. His main error, however, lay in misapprehending the case: this misapprehension lent strength to the assumption that my friend was an 'Old Bailey' (*i. e.*, a sharking) attorney; whilst, on the other hand, that assumption lent strength to his misapprehension of the case. Angry interruptions began: these, being retorted or resented with just indignation, produced an irritation and ill temper, which, of themselves, were quite sufficient to raise a cloud of perplexity over any law process, and to obscure it for any understanding. The commissioner grew warmer and warmer; and, at length, he had the presumption to say, — 'Sir, you are a disgrace to your profession.' When such sugar-plums, as Captain M'Turk the peacemaker observes, were flying between them, there could be no room for further parley. That same night the commissioner was waited on by a friend of the barrister's, who cleared up his own misconceptions to the disconcerted judge; placed him, even to his own judgment, thoroughly in the wrong; and then most courteously troubled him for a reference to some gentleman, who would arrange the terms of a meeting for the next day. The commissioner was too just and grave a man to be satisfied with himself, on a cool review of his own conduct. Here was a quarrel ripened into a mortal feud, likely enough to terminate in wounds, or, possibly, in death to one of the parties, which, on his side, carried with it no palliations from any provocation

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received, or from wrong and insult, in any form, sustained: these, in an aggravated shape, could be pleaded by my friend, but with no opening for retaliatory pleas on the part of the magistrate. That name, again, of magistrate, increased his offence and pointed its moral: he, a conservator of the laws — he, a dispenser of equity, sitting even at the very moment on the judgment seat — *he* to have commenced a brawl, nay, to have fastened a quarrel upon a man even then of some consideration and of high promise; a quarrel which finally tended to this result — shoot or be shot. That commissioner's situation and state of mind, for the succeeding night, were certainly not enviable: like Southey's erring painter, who had yielded to the temptation of the subtle fiend,

> 'With repentance his only companion he lay;
> And a dismal companion is she.'

Meantime, my friend — what was *his* condition; and how did *he* pass the interval? I have heard him feelingly describe the misery, the blank anguish of this memorable night. Sometimes it happens that a man's conscience is wounded; but this very wound is the means, perhaps, by which his feelings are spared for the present: sometimes his feelings are lacerated; but this very laceration makes the ransom for his conscience. Here, on the contrary, his feelings and his happiness were dimmed by the very same cause which offered pain and outrage to his conscience. He was, upon principle, a hater of duelling. Under any circumstances, he would have condemned the man who could, for a light cause, or almost for the weightiest, have so much as *accepted* a challenge. Yet, here he was positively *offering* a challenge; and to whom? To a man whom he scarcely knew by sight; whom he had never spoken to until this unfortunate afternoon; and towards

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whom (now that the momentary excitement of anger had passed away) he felt no atom of passion or resentment whatsoever. As a free 'unhoused' young man, therefore, had he been such, without ties or obligations in life, he would have felt the profoundest compunction at the anticipation of any serious injury inflicted upon another man's hopes or happiness, or upon his own. But what was his real situation? He was a married man, married to the woman of his choice within a very few years: he was also a father, having one most promising son, somewhere about three years old. His young wife and his son composed his family; and both were dependent, in the most absolute sense, for all they possessed or they expected — for all they had or ever could have — upon his own exertions. Abandoned by him, losing him, they forfeited, in one hour, every chance of comfort, respectability, or security from scorn and humiliation. The mother, a woman of strong understanding and most excellent judgment — good and upright herself — liable, therefore, to no habit of suspicion, and constitutionally cheerful, went to bed with her young son, thinking no evil. Midnight came, one, two o'clock; mother and child had long been asleep; nor did either of them dream of that danger which even now was yawning under their feet. The barrister had spent the hours from ten to two in drawing up his will, and in writing such letters as might have the best chance, in case of fatal issue to himself, for obtaining some aid to the desolate condition of those two beings whom he would leave behind, unprotected and without provision. Oftentimes he stole into the bedroom, and gazed with anguish upon the innocent objects of his love; and, as his conscience now told him, of his bitterest perfidy. 'Will you then leave us? Are you really going to betray us? Will you deliberately consign us to life-long poverty,

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and scorn, and grief?' These affecting apostrophes he seemed, in the silence of the night, to hear almost with bodily ears. Silent reproaches seemed written upon their sleeping features; and once, when his wife suddenly awakened under the glare of the lamp which he carried, he felt the strongest impulse to fly from the room; but he faltered, and stood rooted to the spot. She looked at him smilingly, and asked why he was so long in coming to bed. He pleaded an excuse, which she easily admitted, of some law case to study against the morning, or some law paper to draw. She was satisfied; and fell asleep again. He, however, fearing, above all things, that he might miss the time for his appointment, resolutely abided by his plan of not going to bed; for the meeting was to take place at Chalk Farm, and by half-past five in the morning: that is, about one hour after sunrise. One hour and a half before this time, in the gray dawn, just when the silence of Nature and of mighty London was most absolute, he crept stealthily, and like a guilty thing, to the bedside of his sleeping wife and child; took, what he believed might be his final look of them; kissed them softly; and, according to his own quotation from Coleridge's 'Remorse,'

'In agony that could not be remembered,'

and a conflict with himself that defied all rehearsal, he quitted his peaceful cottage at Chelsea in order to seek for the friend who had undertaken to act as his second. He had good reason, from what he had heard on the night before, to believe his antagonist an excellent shot; and, having no sort of expectation that any interruption could offer to the regular progress of the duel, he, as the challenger, would have to stand the first fire; at any rate, conceiving this to be the fair privilege of the party challenged, he did not mean to avail himself of any proposal for draw-

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ing lots upon the occasion, even if such a proposal should happen to be made. Thus far the affair had travelled through the regular stages of expectation and suspense; but the interest of the case as a story was marred and brought to an abrupt conclusion by the conduct of the commissioner. He was a man of known courage, but he also was a man of conscientious scruples; and, amongst other instances of courage, had the courage to own himself in the wrong. He felt that his conduct hitherto had not been wise or temperate, and that he would be sadly aggravating his original error, by persisting in aiming at a man's life, upon which life hung also the happiness of others, merely because he had offered to that man a most unwarranted insult. Feeling this, he thought fit, at first coming upon the ground, to declare that, having learned, since the scene in court, the real character of his antagonist, and the extent of his own mistake, he was resolved to brave all appearances and ill-natured judgments, by making an ample apology; which, accordingly, he did; and so the affair terminated. I have thought it right, however, to report the circumstances, both because they were really true in every particular, but, much more, because they place in strong relief one feature which is often found in these cases, and which is allowed far too little weight in distributing the blame between the parties: to this I wish to solicit the reader's attention. During the hours of this never-to-be-forgotten night of wretchedness and anxiety, my friend's reflection was naturally forced upon the causes which had produced it. In the world's judgment, he was aware that he himself, as the one charged with the most weighty responsibility, (those who depend upon him being the most entirely helpless,) would have to sustain by much the heaviest censure: and yet what was the real proportion of blame between

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the parties? He, when provoked and publicly insulted, had retorted angrily: that was almost irresistible under the constitution of human feelings; the meekest of men could scarcely do less. But surely the true *onus* of wrong and moral responsibility for all which might follow, rested upon that party who, giving way to mixed impulses of rash judgment, and of morose temper, had allowed himself to make a most unprovoked assault upon the character of one whom he did not know; well aware that such words, uttered publicly by a person in authority, must, by some course or other, be washed out and cancelled; or, if not, that the party submitting to such defamatory insults, would at once exile himself from the society and countenance of his professional brethren. Now, then, in all justice, it should be so ordered, that the weight of public indignation might descend upon him, whoever he might be, (and, of course, the more heavily, according to the authority of his station, and his power of inflicting wrong,) who should thus wantonly abuse his means of influence, to the dishonor or injury of an unoffending party. We clothe a public officer with power, we arm him with influential authority over public opinion; not that he may apply these authentic sanctions to the backing of his own malice, and giving weight to his private caprices: and, wherever such abuse takes place, then it should be so contrived that some reaction in behalf of the injured person might receive a sanction equally public. And, upon this point, I shall say a word or two more, after first stating my own case; a case where the outrage was far more insufferable, more deliberate, and more malicious; but, on the other hand, in this respect less effectual for injury, that it carried with it no sanction from any official station or repute in the unknown parties who offered the wrong.

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The circumstances were these : — In 1824, I had come up to London upon an errand, in itself sufficiently vexatious — of fighting against pecuniary embarrassments, by literary labors ; but, as had always happened hitherto, with very imperfect success, from the miserable thwartings I incurred through the deranged state of the liver. My zeal was great, and my application was unintermitting ; but spirits radically vitiated, chiefly through the direct mechanical depression caused by one important organ deranged ; and, secondly, by a reflex effect of depression through my own thoughts, in estimating my prospects ; together with the aggravation of my case, by the inevitable exile from my own mountain home, — all this reduced the value of my exertions in a deplorable way. It was rare indeed that I could satisfy my own judgment, even tolerably, with the quality of any literary article I produced ; and my power to make sustained exertions, drooped, in a way I could not control, every other hour of the day : insomuch, that what with parts to be cancelled, and what with whole days of torpor and pure defect of power to produce any thing at all, very often it turned out that all my labors were barely sufficient (sometimes not sufficient) to meet the current expenses of my residence in London. Three months' literary toil terminated, at times in a result = 0 ; the whole *plus* being just equal to the *minus*, created by two separate establishments, and one of them in the most expensive city of the world. Gloomy, indeed, was my state of mind at that period : for, though I made prodigious efforts to recover my health, (sensible that all other efforts depended for their result upon this elementary effort, which was the *conditio sine qua non* for the rest,) yet all availed me not ; and a curse seemed to settle upon whatever I then undertook. Such was my frame of mind on reaching London :

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in fact it never varied. One canopy of murky clouds (a copy of that dun atmosphere which settles so often upon London) brooded for ever upon my spirits, which were in one uniformly low key of cheerless despondency; and, on this particular morning, my depression had been deeper than usual, from the effects of a long continuous journey of three hundred miles, and of exhaustion from want of sleep. I had reached London, about six o'clock in the morning, by one of the northern mails; and, resigning myself as usual in such cases, to the chance destination of the coach, after delivering our bags in Lombard Street, I was driven down to a great city hotel. Here there were hot baths; and, somewhat restored by this luxurious refreshment, about eight o'clock I was seated at a breakfast table; upon which, in a few minutes, as an appendage not less essential than the tea-service, one of the waiters laid that morning's *Times*, just reeking from the press. The *Times*, by the way, is notoriously the leading journal of Europe any where; but, in London, and more peculiarly in the city quarter of London, it enjoys a pre-eminence scarcely understood elsewhere. Here it is not *a* morning paper, but *the* morning paper: no other is known, no other is cited as authority in matters of fact. Strolling with my eye indolently over the vast Babylonian confusion of the enormous columns, naturally as one of the *corps littéraire*, I found my attention drawn to those regions of the paper which announced forthcoming publications. Amongst them was a notice of a satirical journal, very low priced, and already advanced to its third or fourth number. My heart palpitated a little on seeing myself announced as the principal theme for the malice of the current number. The reader must not suppose that I was left in any doubt as to the quality of the notice with which I had been honored; and that, by possibility,

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I was solacing my vanity with some anticipation of honeyed compliments. That, I can assure him, was made altogether impossible, by the kind of language which flourished in the very foreground of the *programme*, and even of the running title. The exposure and *depluming* (to borrow a good word from the fine old rhetorician, Fuller,) of the leading 'humbugs' of the age — *that* was announced as the regular business of the journal: and the only question which remained to be settled was, the more or less of the degree; and also one other question, even more interesting still, viz. — whether personal abuse were intermingled with literary. Happiness, as I have experienced in other periods of my life, deep domestic happiness, makes a man comparatively careless of ridicule, of sarcasm, or of abuse. But calamity — the degradation, in the world's eye, of every man who is fighting with pecuniary difficulties — exasperates beyond all that can be imagined, a man's sensibility to insult. He is even apprehensive of insult — tremulously, fantastically apprehensive, where none is intended; and like Wordsworth's shepherd, with his very understanding consciously abused and depraved by his misfortunes, is ready to say, at all hours —

> 'And every man I met or faced,
> Methought he knew some ill of me.'

Some notice, perhaps, the newspaper had taken of this new satirical journal, or some extracts might have been made from it; at all events, I had ascertained its character so well that, in this respect, I had nothing to learn. It now remained to get the number which professed to be seasoned with my particular case; and it may be supposed that I did not loiter over my breakfast after this discovery. Something which I saw or suspected amongst the significant hints of a paragraph or advertisement,

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made me fear that there might possibly be insinuations or downright assertion in the libel requiring instant public notice; and, therefore, on a motive of prudence, had I even otherwise felt that indifference for slander which now I *do* feel, but which, in those years, morbid irritability of temperament forbade me to affect, I should still have thought it right to look after the work; which now I did: and, by nine o'clock in the morning — an hour at which few people had seen me for years — I was on my road to Smithfield. Smithfield? Yes; even so. All known and respectable publishers having declined any connection with the work, the writers had facetiously resorted to this *aceldama*, or slaughtering quarter of London — to these vast shambles, as typical, I suppose, of their own slaughtering spirit. On my road to Smithfield, I could not but pause for one moment to reflect on the pure defecated malice which must have prompted an attack upon myself. Retaliation or retort it could not pretend to be. To most literary men, scattering their written reviews, or their opinions, by word of mouth, to the right and the left with all possible carelessness, it never can be matter of surprise, or altogether of complaint, (unless as a question of degrees,) that angry notices, or malicious notices, should be taken of themselves. Few, indeed, of literary men can pretend to any absolute innocence from offence, and from such even as may have seemed deliberate. But I, for my part, could. Knowing the rapidity with which all remarks *of* literary men *upon* literary men are apt to circulate, I had studiously and resolutely forborne to say anything, whether of a writer or a book, unless where it happened that I could say something that would be felt as complimentary. And as to written reviews, so much did I dislike the assumption of judicial functions and authority over the works of my own brother authors and contem-

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poraries, that I have, in my whole life, written only two; at that time only one; and that one, though a review of an English novel, was substantially a review of a German book, taking little notice, or none, of the English translator; for, although he, a good German scholar now, was a very imperfect one at that time, and was, therefore, every way open to criticism, I had evaded this invidious office applied to a novice in literature, and (after pointing out one or two slight blemishes of trivial importance) all that I said of a general nature was a compliment to him upon the felicity of his verses. Upon the German author I was, indeed, severe, but hardly as much as he deserved. The other review as a tissue of merriment and fun; and though, it is true, I *did* hear that the fair authoress was offended at one jest, I may safely leave it for any reader to judge between us. She, or her brother, amongst other Latin epigrams, had one addressed to a young lady *upon the loss of her keys*. This, the substance of the lines showed to have been the intention; but (by a very venial error in one who was writing Latin from early remembrance of it, and not in the character of a professing scholar) the title was written *De clavis* instead of *De clavibus amissis;* upon which I observed that the writer had selected a singular topic for condolence with a young lady,—viz., '*on the loss of her cudgels;*' (*clavis*, as an ablative, coming clearly from *clava*.) This (but I can hardly believe it) was said to have offended Miss H.; and, at all events, this was the extent of my personalities. Many kind things I had said; much honor, much admiration, I had professed at that period of my life in occasional papers or private letters, towards many of my contemporaries, but never anything censorious or harsh; and simply on a principle of courteous forbearance which I have felt to be due towards those who are brothers of

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the same liberal profession with one's self. I could not feel, when reviewing my whole life, that in any one instance, by act, by word, or by intention, I had offered any unkindness, far less any wrong or insult, towards a brother author. I was at a loss, therefore, to decipher the impulse under which the malignant libeller could have written, in making (as I suspected already) my private history the subject of his calumnies. Jealousy, I have since understood, jealousy, was the foundation of the whole. A little book of mine had made its way into drawing-rooms where some book of his had not been heard of.

On reaching Smithfield, I found the publisher to be a medical bookseller, and, to my surprise, having every appearance of being a grave, respectable man; notwithstanding this undeniable fact, that the libellous journal, to which he thought proper to affix his sanction, trespassed on decency, not only by its slander, but, in some instances, by downright obscenity; and, worse than that, by prurient solicitations to the libidinous imagination, through blanks, seasonably interspersed. I said nothing to him in the way of inquiry; for I easily guessed that the knot of writers who were here clubbing their *virus*, had not so ill combined their plans as to leave them open to detection by a question from any chance stranger. Having, therefore, purchased a set of the journal, then amounting to three or four numbers, I went out; and in the elegant promenades of Smithfield, I read the lucubrations of my libeller. Fit academy for such amenities of literature! Fourteen years have gone by since then; and, possibly, the unknown hound who yelled, on that occasion, among this kennel of curs, may, long since, have buried himself and his malice in the grave. Suffice it here to say, that, calm as I am now, and careless on recalling the remem-

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brance of this brutal libel, at that time I was convulsed with wrath. As respected myself, there was a depth of malignity in the article which struck me as perfectly mysterious. How could any man have made an enemy so profound, and not even have suspected it? *That* puzzled me. For, with respect to the other objects of attack, such as Sir Humphry Davy, &c., it was clear that the malice was assumed; that, at most, it was the gay impertinence of some man upon town, armed with triple Irish brass from original defect of feeling, and willing to raise an income by running a muck at any person just then occupying enough of public interest to make the abuse saleable. But, in my case, the man flew like a bull-dog at the throat, with a pertinacity and *acharnement* of malice that would have caused me to laugh immoderately, had it not been for one intolerable wound to my feelings. These mercenary libellers, whose stiletto is in the market, and at any man's service for a fixed price, callous and insensible as they are, yet retain enough of the principles common to human nature, under every modification, to know where to plant their wounds. Like savage hackney coachmen, they knew where there is a *raw*. And the instincts of human nature teach them that every man is vulnerable through his female connections. There lies his honor; there his strength; there his weakness. In their keeping is the heaven of his happiness; in them and through them the earthy of its fragility. Many there are who do not feel the *maternal* relation to be one in which any excessive freight of honor or sensibility is embarked. Neither is the name of *sister*, though tender in early years, and impressive to the fireside sensibilities, universally and through life the same magical sound. A sister is a creature whose very property and tendency (*qua* sister) is to alienate herself, not

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to gather round your centre. But the names of *wife* and *daughter*, these are the supreme and starry charities of life: and he who, under a mask, fighting in darkness, attacks you there, that coward has you at disadvantage. I stood in those hideous shambles of Smithfield: upwards I looked to the clouds, downwards to the earth, for vengeance. I trembled with excessive wrath — such was my infirmity of feeling at that time, and in that condition of health; and had I possessed forty thousand lives, all, and every one individually, I would have sacrificed in vindication of her that was thus cruelly libelled. Shall I give currency to his malice, shall I aid and promote it by repeating it? No. And yet why not? Why should I scruple, as if afraid to challenge his falsehoods? — why should I scruple to cite them? He, this libeller, asserted — But faugh!

This slander seemed to have been built upon some special knowledge of me; for I had often spoken with horror of those who could marry persons in a condition which obliged them to obedience — a case which had happened repeatedly within my own knowledge; and I had spoken on this ground, that the authority of a master might be *supposed* to have been interposed, whether it really were so or not, in favor of his designs; and thus a presumption, however false it might be, always remained that his wooing had been, perhaps, not the wooing of perfect freedom, so essential to the dignity of woman, and, therefore, essential to his own dignity; but that, perhaps, it had been favored by circumstances, and by opportunities created, if it had not even been favored, by express exertions of authority. The libeller, therefore, *did* seem to have some knowledge of my peculiar opinions: yet, in other points, either from sincere ignorance or from affectation, and by way of turning aside suspicion, he certainly mani-

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fested a non-acquaintance with facts relating to me that must have been familiar enough to all within my circle.

Let me pursue the case to its last stage. The reader will say, perhaps, Why complain of a paltry journal that assuredly never made any noise? for I, the reader, never heard of it till now. No, that is very possible; for the truth is, and odd enough it seems, this malicious journal prospered so little, that, positively, at the seventh No. it stopped. Laugh I did, and laugh I could not help but do, at this picture of baffled malice; writers willing and ready to fire with poisoned bullets, and yet perfectly unable to get an effective aim, from sheer want of co-operation on the part of the public.

However, the case as it respected me, went farther than it did with respect to the public. Would it be believed that human malice, with respect to a man not even known by sight to his assailants, as was clear from one part of their personalities, finally — that is to say, months afterwards — adopted the following course: — The journal had sunk under public scorn and neglect; neglect at first, but, perhaps, scorn at the last; for, when the writers found that mere malice availed not to draw public attention, they adopted the plan of baiting their hooks with obscenity; and they published a paper, professing to be written by Lord Byron, called, '*My Wedding Night;*' and very possible, from internal evidence, to have been really written by him; and yet the combined forces of Byron and obscenity failed to save them — which is rather remarkable. Having sunk, one might suppose the journal was at an end, for good and evil; and, especially, that all, who had been molested by it, or held up to ridicule, might now calculate on rest. By no means: First of all they made inquiries about the localities of my residence, and

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the town nearest to my own family. Nothing was effected unless they carried the insult, addressed to my family, into the knowledge of that family and its circle. My cottage in Grasmere was just 280 miles from London, and eighteen miles from any town whatsoever. The nearest was Kendal, a place of perhaps 16,000 inhabitants; and the nearest, therefore, at which there were any newspapers printed. There were two; one denominated *The Gazette;* the other *The Chronicle.* The first was Tory and Conservative; had been so from its foundation; and was, besides, generous in its treatment of private character. My own contributions to it I will mention hereafter. *The Chronicle*, on the other hand, was a violent reforming journal, and conducted in a partisan spirit. To this newspaper the article was addressed; by this newspaper it was published; and by this it was carried into my own '*next-door*' neighborhood. Next-door neighborhood? But that surely must be the very best direction these libellers could give to their malice; for there, at least, the falsehood of their malice must be notorious. Why, yes: and in that which *was* my neighborhoood, according to the most literal interpretation of the term, a greater favor could not have been done me, nor a more laughable humiliation for my unprovoked enemies. Commentary or refutation there needed none; the utter falsehood of the main allegations was so obvious to every man, woman, and child, that, of necessity, it discredited even those parts which might, for any thing known to my neighbors, have been true. Nay, it was the means of procuring for me a generous expression of sympathy, that would else have been wanting; for some gentlemen of the neighborhood, who were but slightly known to me, put the malignant journal into the fire at a public reading-room. So far was well; but, on the other hand, in Kendal, a town

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nearly twenty miles distant, of necessity I was but imperfectly known; and though there was a pretty general expression of disgust at the character of the publication, and the wanton malignity which it bore upon its front, since, true or not true, no shadow of a reason was pleaded for thus bringing forward statements expressly to injure me, or to make me unhappy; yet there must have been many, in so large a place, who had too little interest in the question, or too limited means of inquiry, for ever ascertaining the truth. Consequently, in *their* minds, to this hour, my name, as one previously known to them, and repeatedly before the town in connection with political or literary articles in their conservative journals, must have suffered.

But the main purpose, for which I have reported the circumstances of these two cases, relates to the casuistry of duelling. Casuistry, as I have already said, is the moral philosophy of *cases* — that is, of anomalous combinations of circumstances — that, for any reason whatsoever, do not fall, or do not seem to fall, under the general rules of morality. As a general rule, it must, doubtless, be unlawful to attempt another man's life, or to hazard your own. Very special circumstances must concur to make out any case of exception; and even then it is evident, that one of the parties must always be deeply in the wrong. But it *does* strike me, that the present casuistry of society upon the question of duelling, is profoundly wrong, and wrong by manifest injustice. Very little distinction is ever made, in practice, by those who apply their judgments to such cases, between the man who, upon principle, practises the most cautious self-restraint and moderation in his daily demeanor, never under any circumstances offering an insult, or any just occasion of quarrel, and resorting to duel only under the most insufferable provocation, between this man, on the one side,

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and the most wanton ruffian, on the other, who makes a common practice of playing upon other men's feelings, whether in reliance upon superior bodily strength, or upon the pacific disposition of conscientious men, and fathers of families. Yet, surely, the difference between them goes the whole extent of the interval between wrong and right. Even the question, 'Who gave the challenge?' which *is* sometimes put, often merges virtually in the transcendent question, 'Who gave the provocation?' For it is important to observe, in both the cases which I have reported, that the *onus* of offering the challenge was thrown upon the unoffending party; and thus, in a legal sense, that party is made to give the provocation who, in a moral sense, received it. But surely, if even the law makes allowances for human infirmity, when provoked beyond what it can endure, — we, in our brotherly judgments upon each other, ought, *a fortiori*, to take into the equity of our considerations the amount and quality of the offence. It will be objected that the law, so far from allowing for, expressly refuses to allow for, sudden sallies of anger or explosions of vindictive fury, unless in so far as they are extempore, and before the reflecting judgment has had time to recover itself. Any indication that the party had leisure for calm review, or for a cool selection of means and contrivances in executing his vindictive purposes, will be fatal to a claim of that nature. This is true; but the nature of a printed libel is, continually to renew itself as an insult. The subject of it reads this libel, perhaps, in solitude; and, by a great exertion of self-command, resolves to bear it with fortitude and in silence. Some days after, in a public room, he sees strangers reading it also: he hears them scoffing and laughing loudly: in the midst of all this, he sees himself pointed out to their notice by some one of the party who

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happens to be acquainted with his person; and, possibly, if the libel take that particular shape which excessive malice is most likely to select, he will hear the name of some female relative, dearer, it may be to him, and more sacred in his ears, than all this world beside, bandied about with scorn and mockery by those who have not the poor excuse of the original libellers, but are, in fact, adopting the second-hand malignity of others. Such cases, with respect to libels that are quickened into popularity by interesting circumstances, or by a personal interest attached to any of the parties, or by wit, or by extraordinary malice, or by scenical circumstances, or by circumstances unusually ludicrous, are but too likely to occur; and, with every fresh repetition, the keenness of the original provocation is renewed, and in an accelerated ratio.

Again, with reference to my own case, or to any case resembling that, let it be granted that I was immoderately and unreasonably transported by anger at the moment; — I thought so myself, after a time, when the journal which published the libel sank under the public neglect; but this was an after consideration; and, at the moment, how heavy an aggravation was given to the stings of the malice, by the deep dejection, from embarrassed circumstances and from disordered health, which then possessed me; aggravations, perhaps, known to the libellers as encouragements for proceeding at the time, and often enough likely to exist in other men's cases. Now, in the case as it actually occurred, it so happened that the malicious writers had, by the libel, dishonored themselves too deeply in the public opinion, to venture upon coming forward, in their own persons, to avow their own work; but suppose them to have done so (as, in fact, even in this case, they might have done, had they not published their intention of

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driving a regular trade in libel and in slander;) suppose them insolently to beard you in public haunts; to cross your path continually when in company with the very female relative upon whom they had done their best to point the finger of public scorn; and suppose them further, by the whole artillery of contemptuous looks, words, gestures, and unrepressed laughter, to republish, as it were, ratify, and publicly to apply, personally, their own original libel, as often as chance or as opportunity (eagerly improved) should throw you together in places of general resort; and suppose, finally, that the central figure — nay, in their account, the very butt throughout this entire drama of malice — should chance to be an innocent, gentle-hearted, dejected, suffering woman, utterly unknown to her persecutors, and selected as their martyr merely for her relationship to yourself — suppose her, in short, to be your wife — a lovely young woman sustained by womanly dignity, or else ready to sink into the earth with shame, under the cruel and unmanly insults heaped upon her, and having no protector on earth but yourself: lay all this together, and then say whether, in such a case, the most philosophic or the most Christian patience might not excusably give way; whether flesh and blood could do otherwise than give way, and seek redress for the past, but, at all events, security for the future, in what, perhaps, might be the sole course open to you — an appeal to arms.

Let it not be said that the case here proposed, by way of hypothesis, is an extreme one: for the very argument has contemplated extreme cases: since, whilst conceding that duelling is an unlawful and useless remedy for cases of ordinary wrong, where there is no malice to resist a more conciliatory mode of settlement, and where it is difficult to imagine any deliberate insult except such as is

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palliated by intoxication — conceding this, I have yet supposed it possible that cases may arise, with circumstances of contumely and outrage, growing out of deep inexorable malice, which cannot be redressed, *as things now are*, without an appeal to the *voye de fait*. 'But this is so barbarous an expedient in days of high civilization.' Why, yes, it labors with the semi-barbarism of chivalry: yet, on the other hand, this mention of chivalry reminds me to say, that if this practice of duelling share the blame of chivalry, one memorable praise there is, which also it may claim as common to them both. It is a praise which I have often insisted on; and the very sublime of prejudice I would challenge to deny it. Burke, in his well known apology for chivalry, thus expresses his sense of the immeasurable benefits which it conferred upon society, as a supplementary code of law, reaching those cases which the weakness of municipal law was then unavailing to meet, and at a price so trivial in bloodshed or violence — he calls it 'the cheap defence of nations.' Yes, undoubtedly; and surely the same praise belongs incontestably to the law of duelling. For one duel *in esse*, there are ten thousand, every day of our lives, amid populous cities, *in posse:* one challenge is given, a myriad are feared: one life (and usually the most worthless, by any actual good rendered to society) is sacrified, suppose triennially, from a nation; *every* life is endangered by certain modes of behavior. Hence, then, and at a cost inconceivably trifling, the peace of society is maintained in cases which no law, no severity of police, ever could effectually reach. Brutal strength would reign paramount in the walks of public life; brutal intoxication would follow out its lawless impulses, were it not for the fear which now is always in the rear — the fear of being summoned to a strict summary,

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account, liable to the most perilous consequences. This is not open to denial: the actual basis upon which reposes the security of us all, the peace of our wives and our daughters, and our own immunity from the vilest degradations under their eyes, is the necessity, known to every gentleman, of answering for his outrages in a way which strips him of all unfair advantages, except one (which is not often possessed,) which places the weak upon a level with the strong, and the quiet citizen upon a level with the military adventurer, or the ruffian of the gambling-house. The fact, I say, cannot be denied; neither can the low price be denied at which this vast result is obtained. And it is evident that, on the principle of expediency, adopted as the basis of morality by Paley, the justification of duelling is complete: for the greatest sum of immediate happiness is produced at the least possible sacrifice.* But there are many men of high

* Neither would it be open to Paley to plead that the final or remotest consequences must be taken into the calculation; and that one of these would be the weakening of all moral sanctions, and thus, indirectly, an injury to morality, which might more than compensate the immediate benefit to social peace and security; for this mode of arguing the case would bring us back to the very principle which his own implicitly, or by involution, rejects: since it would tell us to obey the principle itself without reference to the apparent consequences. By the by, Paley has an express section of his work against the law of honor as a valid rule of action; but, as Cicero says of Epicurus, it matters little what he says; the question for us is *quam sibi convenienter*, how far consistently with himself. Now, as Sir James Mackintosh justly remarks, all that Paley says in refutation of the principle of worldly honor is hollow and unmeaning. In fact, it is merely one of the commonplaces adopted by satire, and no philosophy at all. Honor, for instance, allows you, upon paying gambling debts, to neglect or evade all others: honor, again, allows you to seduce a married woman: and he would secretly insinuate that honor *enjoins* all this; but it is evident that honor simply forbears to forbid all this: in other words, it is a very limited rule of action, not applying to one case of conduct in fifty. It might as well be said, that Ecclesiastical Courts sanction murder, because that crime lies out o their jurisdiction.

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moral principle, and yet not professing to rest upon Christianity, who reject this prudential basis of ethics as the death of all morality. And these men hold, that the social recognition of any one out of the three following dangerous and immoral principles, viz. — 1*st*, That a man may lawfully sport with his own life; 2*dly*, That he may lawfully sport with the life of another; 3*dly*, That he may lawfully seek his redress for a social wrong, by any other channel than the law tribunals of the land: that the recognition of these, or any of them, by the jurisprudence of a nation, is a mortal wound to the very key-stone upon which the whole vast arch of morality reposes. Well, in candor, I must admit that, by justifying, in courts of judicature, through the verdicts of juries, that mode of personal redress and self-vindication, to heal and prevent which was one of the original motives for gathering into social communities, and setting up an empire of public law as paramount to all private exercise of power, a fatal wound is given to the sanctity of moral right, of the public conscience, and of law in its elementary field. So much I admit; but I say also, that the case arises out of a great dilemma, with difficulties on both sides; and that, in all *practical* applications of philosophy, amongst materials so imperfect as men, just as in all attempts to realize the rigor of mathematical laws amongst earthly mechanics, inevitably there will arise such dilemmas and cases of opprobrium to the reflecting intellect. However, in conclusion, I shall say four things, which I request my opponent, whoever he may be, to consider; for they are things which certainly ought to have weight; and some important errors have arisen by neglecting them.

First, Then, let him remember that it is the principle at stake — viz., the recognition by a legal tribunal, as lawful

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or innocent of any attempt to violate the laws, or to take the law into our own hands: this it is, and the mortal taint which is thus introduced into the public morality of a Christian land, thus authentically introduced; thus sealed and countersigned by judicial authority; the majesty of law actually interfering to justify, with the solemnities of trial, a flagrant violation of law; this it is, this only, and not the amount of injury sustained by society, which gives value to the question. For, as to the injury, I have already remarked, that a very trivial annual loss — one life, perhaps, upon ten millions, and that life often as little practically valuable as any amongst us — that pays our fine or ransom in that account. And, in reality, there is one popular error made upon this subject, when the question is raised about the institution of some *Court of Honor*, or *Court of Appeal in cases of injury to the feelings*, under the sanction of Parliament, which satisfactorily demonstrates the trivial amount of injury sustained: it is said on such occasions, that *de minimis non curat lex* — that the mischief, in fact, is too narrow and limited for the regard of the legislature. And we may be assured that, if the evil were ever to become an extensive one, the notice of Parliament soon *would* be attracted to the subject; and hence we may derive a hint for an amended view of the policy adopted in past ages. Princes not distinguished for their religious scruples, made it, in different ages and places, a capital offence to engage in a duel: whence it is inferred, falsely, that, in former times, a more public homage was paid to Christian principle. But the fact is, that not the anti-Christian character of the offence so much as its greater frequency, and the consequent extension of a civil mischief was the ruling consideration with the lawgiver. Among other causes for this greater prevalence of duels, was the

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composition of armies, more often brought together upon mercenary principles from a large variety of different nations, whose peculiar usages, points of traditional honor, and even the oddness of their several languages to the ear, formed a perpetual occasion of insult and quarrel. Fluellen's affair with Pistol, we may be sure, was no rare but a representative case.

Secondly, In confirmation of what I have said about duelling, as the great conductor for carrying off the excess of angry irritation in society, I will repeat what was said to me by a man of great ability and distinguished powers, as well as opportunities for observation, in reference to a provincial English town, and the cabals which prevailed there. These cabals — some political, arising out of past electioneering contests; some municipal, arising out of the corporation disputes; some personal, arising out of family rivalships, or old traditionary disputes — had led to various feuds that vexed the peace of the town in a degree very considerably beyond the common experience of towns reaching the same magnitude. How was this accounted for? The word *tradesman* is, more than even the term *middle class*, liable to great ambiguity of meaning; for it includes a range so large as to take in some who tread on the heels even of the highest aristocracy, and some at the other end, who rank not at all higher than day-laborers or handicraftsmen. Now, those who ranked with gentlemen, took the ordinary course of gentlemen in righting themselves under personal insults; and the result was, that, amongst *them* or *their* families, no feuds were subsisting of ancient standing. No ill blood was nursed; no calumnies or conspicuous want of charity prevailed. Not that they often fought duels: on the contrary, a duel was a very rare event amongst the indigenous gentry of

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the place; but it was sufficient to secure all the effects of duelling, that it was known, with respect to this class, that, in the last resort, they were ready to fight. Now, on the other had, the lowest order of tradesmen had *their* method of terminating quarrels — the old English method of their fathers — viz., by pugilistic contests. And *they* also cherished no malice against each other or amongst their families. 'But,' said my informant, 'some of those who occupied the intermediate stations in this hierarchy of trade, found themselves most awkwardly situated. So far they shared in the refinements of modern society, that they disdained the coarse mode of settling quarrels by their fists. On the other hand, there was a special and peculiar reason pressing upon this class, which restrained them from aspiring to the more aristocratic modes of fighting. They were sensible of a ridicule, which everywhere attaches to many of the less elevated or liberal modes of exercising trade in going out to fight with sword and pistol. This ridicule was sharpened and made more effectual, in *their* case, from the circumstance of the Royal Family and the court making this particular town a frequent place of residence. Besides that apart from the ridicule, many of them depended for a livelihood upon the patronage of royalty or of the nobility, attached to their suite; and most of these patrons would have resented their intrusion upon the privileged ground of the aristocracy in conducting disputes of honor. What was the consequence? These persons, having no natural outlet for their wounded sensibilities, being absolutely debarred from *any* mode of settling their disputes, cherished inextinguishable feuds: their quarrels in fact had no natural terminations; and the result was, a spirit of malice and most unchristian want of charity, which could not hope for any final repose, except in death.' Such

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was the report of my observing friend: the particular town may be easily guessed at; and I have little doubt that its condition continues as of old.

Thirdly, It is a very common allegation against duelling, that the ancient Romans and Grecians never practised this mode of settling disputes; and the inference is, of course, unfavorable, not to Christianity, but to us as inconsistent disciples of our own religion; and a second inference is, that the principle of personal honor, well understood, cannot require this satisfaction for its wounds. For the present I shall say nothing on the former head, but not for want of something to say. With respect to the latter, it is a profound mistake, founded on inacquaintance with the manners and the spirit of manners prevalent amongst these imperfectly civilized nations. Honor was a sense not developed in many of its modifications amongst either Greeks or Romans. Cudgelling was at one time used as the remedy in cases of outrageous libel and pasquinade. But it is a point very little to the praise of either people, that no vindictive notice was taken of any possible personalities, simply because the most hideous license had been established for centuries in tongue license and unmanly Billingsgate. This had been promoted by the example hourly ringing in their ears of vernile scurrility. *Verna* — that is, the slave born in the family — had each from the other one universal and proverbial character of foul-mouthed eloquence, which, heard from infancy, could not but furnish a model almost unconsciously to those who had occasion publicly to practise vituperative rhetoric. What they remembered of this vernile licentiousness, constituted the staple of their talk in such situations. And the horrible illustrations left even by the most accomplished and literary of the Roman orators, of their

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shameless and womanly fluency in this dialect of unlicensed abuse, are evidences, not to be resisted, of such obtuseness, such coarseness of feeling, so utter a defect of all the gentlemanly sensibilities, that no man, alive to the real state of things amongst them, would ever think of pleading their example in any other view than as an object of unmitigated disgust. At all events, the long-established custom of deluging each other in the Forum, or even in the Senate, with the foulest abuse, the precedent traditionally delivered through centuries before the time of Cæsar and Cicero, had so robbed it of its sting, that, as a subject for patient endurance, or an occasion for self-conquest in mastering the feelings, it had no merit at all. Anger, prompting an appeal to the cudgel, there might be, but sense of wounded honor, requiring a reparation by appeal to arms, or a washing away by blood, no such feeling could have been subdued or overcome by a Roman, for none such existed. The feelings of wounded honor on such occasions, it will be allowed, are mere reflections (through sympathetic agencies) of feelings and opinions already existing, and generally dispersed through society. Now, in Roman society, the case was a mere subject for laughter; for there were no feelings or opinions pointing to honor, personal honor as a principle of action, nor, consequently, to wounded honor as a subject of complaint. The Romans were not above duelling, but simply not up to that level of civilization.

Finally, with respect to the suggestion of a *Court of Honor*, much might be said that my limits will not allow; but two suggestions I will make. *First*, Recurring to a thing I have already said, I must repeat that no justice would be shown, unless (in a spirit very different from that which usually prevails in society) the weight of public

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indignation, and the displeasure of the court, were made to settle conspicuously upon the AGGRESSOR; not upon the challenger, who is often the party suffering under insufferable provocation, (provocation which even the sternness of penal law, and the holiness of Christian faith allow for,) but upon the author of the original offence. *Secondly*, A much more searching investigation must be made into the conduct of the SECONDS, than is usual in the unprofessional and careless inquisitions of the public into such affairs. Often enough, the seconds hold the fate of their principals entirely in their hands; and instances are not a few, within even my limited knowledge, of cases where murder has been really committed, not by the party who fired the fatal bullet, but by him who, (having it in his power to interfere without loss of honor to any party) has cruelly thought fit — [and, in some instances, apparently for no purpose but that of decorating himself with the name of an energetic man, and of producing a public '*sensation*,' as it is called — a sanguinary affair] — to goad on the tremulous sensibility of a mind distracted between the sense of honor on the one hand, and the agonizing claims of a family on the other, into fatal extremities that might, by a slight concession, have been avoided. I could mention several instances; but, in some of these, I know the circumstances only by report. In one, however, I had my information from parties who were personally connected with the unhappy subject of the affair. The case was this: — A man of distinguished merit, whom I shall not describe more particularly, because it is no part of my purpose to recall old buried feuds, or to insinuate any *personal* blame whatsoever (my business being not with this or that man, but with a system and its principles;) this man, by a step well meant, but injudicious, and liable to a very obvious misinterpretation,

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as though taken in a view of self-interest, had entangled himself in a quarrel. That quarrel would have been settled amicably, or, if not amicably, at least without bloodshed, had it not been for an unlucky accident, combined with a very unwise advice. One morning, after the main dispute had been pretty well adjusted, he was standing at the fireside after breakfast, talking over the affair so far as it had already travelled, when it suddenly and most unhappily came into his head to put this general question — 'Pray, does it strike you that people will be apt, on a review of this whole dispute, to think that there has been too much talking and too little doing?' His evil genius so ordered it, that the man to whom he put this question, was one who, having no military character to rest on, could not (or thought he could not) recommend those pacific counsels which a truly brave man is ever ready to suggest — I put the most friendly construction upon his conduct — and his answer was this — 'Why, if you insist upon my giving a faithful reply, if you *will* require me to be sincere (though I really wish you would not,) in that case my duty is to tell you, that the world *has* been too free in its remarks — that it has, with its usual injustice, been sneering at literary men and *paper pellets*, as the ammunition in which they trade; in short, my dear friend, the world has presumed to say that not you only, but that both parties, have shown a little of' —— 'Yes; I know what you are going to say,' interrupted the other, 'of the *white feather*. Is it not so?' — 'Exactly; you have hit the mark — that is what they say. But how unjust it is: for, says I, but yesterday, to Mr. L. M., who was going on making himself merry with the affair, in a way that was perfectly scandalous — "Sir," says I,' —— but this *says I* never reached the ears of the unhappy man: he had heard enough; and, as a secondary dispute

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was still going on, that had grown out of the first, he seized the very first opening which offered itself, for provoking the issue of a quarrel. The other party was not backward or slack in answering the appeal; and thus, in one morning, the prospect was overcast — peace was no longer possible; and a hostile meeting was arranged. Even at this meeting, much still remained in the power of the seconds: there was an absolute certainty that all fatal consequences might have been evaded, with perfect consideration for the honor of both parties. The principals must unquestionably have felt *that;* but if the seconds would not move in that direction, of course *their* lips were sealed. A more cruel situation could not be imagined; two persons, who never, perhaps, felt more than that fiction of enmity which belonged to the situation, that is to say, assumed the enmity which society presumes rationally incident to a certain position — assumed it as a point of honor, but did not heartily feel it; and even for the slight shade of animosity which, for half an hour, they might have really felt, had thoroughly quelled it before the meeting; these two persons — under no impulses whatever, good or bad, from within, but purely in a hateful necessity of servile obedience to a command from without — prepared to perpetrate what must, in that frame of dispassionate temper, have appeared to each, a purpose of murder, as regarded his antagonist — a purpose of suicide, as regarded himself. Simply a word, barely a syllable, was needed from the 'Friends' (such Friends!) of the parties, to have delivered them, with honor, from this dreadful necessity: that word was not spoken; and because a breath, a motion of the lips, was wanting — because, in fact, the seconds were thoughtless and without feeling, one of the parties has long slept in a premature grave — his early blossoms scattered to the wind — his

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golden promise of fruit blasted; and the other has since lived that kind of life, that, in my mind, *he* was happier who died. Something of the same kind happened in the duel between Lord Camelford and his friend, Mr. Best; something of the same kind in that between Colonel Montgomery and Captain Macnamara. In the former case, the quarrel was, at least, for a noble subject; it concerned a woman. But in the latter, a dog, and a thoughtless lash applied to his troublesome gambols, was the sole subject of dispute. The colonel, as is well known, a very elegant and generous young man, fell; and Captain Macnamara had thenceforwards a worm at his heart, whose gnawings never died. He was a post-captain; and my brother afterwards sailed with him in quality of midshipman. From him I have often heard affecting instances of the degree in which the pangs of remorse had availed, to make one of the bravest men in the service a mere panic-haunted, and, in a moral sense, almost a paralytic wreck. He that, whilst his hand was unstained with blood, would have faced an army of fiends in discharge of his duty, now fancied danger in every common rocking of a boat: he made himself, at times, the subject of laughter at the messes of the junior and more thoughtless officers; and his hand, whenever he had occasion to handle a spy-glass, shook, (to use the common image,) or, rather, shivered, like an aspen tree. Now, if a regular tribunal, authenticated, by Parliament, as the fountain of law, and by the Sovereign, as the fountain of honor, were, under the very narrowest constitution, to apply itself merely to a review of the whole conduct pursued by the seconds, even under this restriction such a tribunal would operate with great advantage. It is needless to direct any severity to the conduct of the principals, unless when that conduct has been outrageous or wanton in provocation: supposing any thing tolerably

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reasonable and natural in the growth of the quarrel, after the quarrel is once 'constituted,' (to borrow a term of Scotch law,) the principals, as they are called, with relation to the subject of dispute, are neither principals, nor even secondaries for the subsequent management of the dispute: they are delivered up, bound hand and foot, into the hands of their technical 'friends;' passive to the law of social usage, as regards the general necessity of pursuing the dispute; passive to the directions of their seconds, as regards the particular mode of pursuing it. It is, therefore, the seconds who are the proper objects of notice for courts of honor; and the error has been, in framing the project of such a court, to imagine the inquiry too much directed upon the behavior of those who cease to be free agents from the very moment that they become liable to any legal investigation whatever: simply as quarrellers, the parties are no objects of question; they are not within the field of any police review; and the very first act which brings them within that field, translates the responsibility (because the free agency) from themselves to their seconds. The whole *questio vexata*, therefore, reduces itself to these logical moments, (to speak the language of mathematics:) the two parties mainly concerned in the case of duelling, are Society and the Seconds. The first, by authorizing such a mode of redress; the latter, by conducting it. Now, I presume, it will be thought hopeless to arraign Society at the bar of any earthly court, or apply any censure or any investigation to its mode of thinking.* To the *principals*, for the

* If it be asked by what title I represent Society, as authorizing (nay, as necessitating) duels, I answer, that I do not allude to any floating opinions of influential circles in society; for these are in continual conflict, and it may be difficult even to guess in which direction the preponderance would lie. I build upon two undeniable results, to be

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reasons given, it would be unjust to apply them: and the inference is, that the *seconds* are the parties to whom their main agency should be directed — as the parties in whose hands lies the practical control of the whole affair, and the whole machinery of opportunities, (so easily improved by a wise humanity) — for sparing bloodshed, for promoting reconciliation, for making those overtures of accommodation and generous apology, which the brave are so ready to agree to, in atonement for hasty words, or rash movements of passion, but which it is impossible for *them* to originate. In short, for impressing the utmost possible spirit of humanizing charity and forbearance upon a practice which, after all, must for ever remain somewhat of an opprobrium to a Christian people; but which, tried by the law of worldly wisdom, is the finest bequest of chivalry,

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anticipated in any regular case of duel, and supported by one uniform course of precedent: — *First*, That, in a civil adjudication of any such case, assuming only that it has been fairly conducted, and agreeably to the old received usages of England, no other verdict is ever given by a jury than one of acquittal. *Secondly*, That, before military tribunals, the result is still stronger; for the party liable to a challenge is not merely acquitted, as a matter of course, if he accepts it with any issue whatsoever, but is positively dishonored and degraded (nay, even dismissed the service, virtually under color of a request that he will sell out) if he does not. These precedents form the current law for English society, as existing amongst gentlemen. Duels, pushed *a l'outrance*, and on the savage principles adopted by a few gambling ruffians on the Continent, (of which a good description is given in the novel of *The most unfortunate Man in the World*,) or by old bucaneering soldiers of Napoleon, at war with all the world, and, in the desperation of cowardice, demanding to fight in a saw-pit or across a table, — this sort of duels is as little recognised by the indulgence of English law, as, in the other extreme, the mock duels of German Burschen are recognised by the gallantry of English society. Duels of the latter sort would be deemed beneath the dignity of judicial inquiry: duels of the other sort, beyond its indulgence. But all other duels, fairly managed in the circumstances, are undeniably privileged amongst non-military persons, and commanded to those who are military.

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the most economic safety-valve for man's malice, that man's wit could devise; the most absolute safeguard of the weak against the brutal; and, finally, (once more to borrow the words of Burke,) in a sense the fullest and most practical, 'the cheap defence of nations;' not indeed against the hostility which besieges from *without*, but against the far more operative nuisance of bad passions that vex and molest the social intercourse of men, by ineradicable impulses from within.

I may illustrate the value of one amongst the suggestions I have made, by looking back and applying it to part of my last anecdote: the case of that promising person who was cut off so prematurely for himself, and so ruinously for the happiness of the surviving antagonist. I may mention, (as a fact known to me on the very best authority,) that the Duke of Wellington was consulted by a person of distinction, who had been interested in the original dispute, with a view to his opinion upon the total merits of the affair, on its validity, as a 'fighting' quarrel, and on the behavior of the parties to it. Upon the last question, the opinion of his Grace was satisfactory. His bias, undoubtedly, if he has any, is likely to lie towards the wisdom of the peace-maker; and possibly, like many an old soldier, he may be apt to regard the right of pursuing quarrels by arms as a privilege not hastily to be extended beyond the military body. But, on the other question, as to the nature of the quarrel, the duke denied that it required a duel; or that a duel was its natural solution. And had the duke been the mediator, it is highly probable that the unfortunate gentleman would now have been living. Certainly, the second quarrel involved far less of irritating materials than the first. It grew out of a hasty word, and nothing more; such as drops from parliamentary debaters every night of any in-

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teresting discussion — drops hastily, is as hastily recalled, or excused, perhaps, as a venial sally of passion, either by the good sense or the magnanimity of the party interested in the wrong. Indeed, by the unanimous consent of all who took notice of the affair, the seconds, or one of them at least, in this case, must be regarded as deeply *responsible for the tragical issue*; nor did I hear of one person who held them blameless, except that one who, of all others, might the most excusably have held them wrong in any result. But now, from such a case brought under the review of a court, such as I have supposed, and improved in the way I have suggested, a lesson so memorable might have been given to the seconds, by a two years' imprisonment — punishment light enough for the wreck of happiness which they caused — that soon, from this single case, raised into a memorable precedent, there would have radiated an effect upon future duels for half a century to come. And no man can easily persuade me that he is in earnest about the extinction of duelling, who does not lend his countenance to a suggestion which would, at least, mitigate the worst evils of the practice, and would, by placing the main agents in responsibility to the court, bring the duel itself immediately under the direct control of that court; would make a legal tribunal not reviewers subsequently, but, in a manner, spectators of the scene; and would carry judicial moderation and skill into the very centre of angry passions; not, as now they act, inefficiently to review, and, by implication, sometimes to approve their most angry ebullitions, but practically to control and repress them.

END OF VOL. II.

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